

EKO



*The Magazine for
East Kilbride
Old Parish Church*

**JANUARY 2021
EDITION 591**

JANUARY/FEBRUARY SERVICES



Following is a list of intended services for January and the beginning of February. Depending on the restrictions at the time the numbers attending the 'live' services might vary. If we are on Tier 3 then 50 will be the maximum allowed in the Church and Glebe St. Hall and 16 in the Lower Hall. If we are on Tier 4, 20 will be the maximum in the Church and the Glebe St. Hall and 16 in the Lower Hall. Actual numbers in the Church will be slightly lower because allowance has to be made for the minister and staff.

So you will have to book your place in the church/halls by contacting the church office on 01355 279004 (leave a message on the answer machine if no one is present. It is monitored all the time remotely) or e-mail to ekopc.office@btconnect.com.

All the online broadcast services can be accessed by going to the church website at ekopc.org.uk and following the links there.

JANUARY

Sunday 3rd	Morning Worship	broadcast online
Sunday 10th	Morning Worship	broadcast online
Sunday 17th	Morning Worship	'Live' broadcast from the church
Sunday 24th	Morning Worship	broadcast online
Sunday 31st	Morning Worship	broadcast online

FEBRUARY

Sunday 7th	Morning Worship	broadcast online
Sunday 14th	Sacrament of Communion	'Live' broadcast

Remember to book your place at the 'live' services being broadcast from the church.

PASTORAL LETTER



Who would have believed when we brought in the New Year at the beginning of 2020, just what a year it would be? The answer obviously, is none of us, for no one could have imagined the events which unfolded, and none of us thought we'd still be living in such strange times at the start of 2021. Yet, we are, and what's more, we're still keeping together as a church family. We've learned so much in these past months about doing church in a different way, and these lessons will stay with us as we begin to look to the future, whatever it may hold.

One of my heroes of the bible is Joshua. He had to step into Moses' giant sandals and assume leadership in the most precarious and unsettling of times. Israel was about to cross the Jordan River at flood stage and attack the city of Jericho. The Israelites had been slaves, then desert nomads. What did they know of war? They couldn't stay where they were, but to go where God was leading was frightening, fraught with change. (And you thought being in tier four was difficult!) God prepared Joshua with these words: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Change is one constant, but the other constant is God himself, the One who never changes, who sees the end from the beginning, and for whom the future holds no surprises. God has made us a solemn promise: to be with us always. That promise holds wherever we are, and is not invalidated by the unexpected. Whatever 2021 holds for us, God has promised to be there with us.

I really don't like roller coasters. In theme parks, I'm the one who holds the coats, while the others go on the rides, I think it's because I don't like fear. Unfortunately, life in this New Year is likely to be that kind of ride, with its dizzying heights, its gut wrenching turns, and its freefall downslopes. But we have a seatmate who is God himself, there to steady us, protect us, and guide us. Today he repeats to us those timeless words that echo across the centuries and into this New Year: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

I wish you all and happy and blessed New Year.

Yours in love,

Anne Paton



NATIVITY PLAY

In the weeks leading up to our Advent services we had planned to include a video of a new, modern version of the Nativity story in the service on 20th December. The video was offered to all churches in early December but when we previewed it we concluded that it didn't fit all that well with the family centred service we usually aim for at this particular service. What to do instead ??

Why not pull together our own "take" on the Christmas story....in less than 3 weeks....can we do it ?? Well we all know Bob the Builders motto, so we set about generating our own virtual version of the Nativity.

Using a rhyming, light-hearted story, some imaginative casting of shepherds and wise men, direction by Iain Shaw and technical support from Austin Hepburn, leading roles of the Angel Gabriel played by Sophie Parry, the parts of the young (??) Mary & Joseph played by Tracy & Andrew Brown, and narration by yours truly, it all came together in a glorious account of Jesus' birth.

Will we do anything like it again ????.
hmmm.....we'll need to discuss that with our agents.

Alistair Walker Session Clerk



HELPING HANDS - A BIG 'THANK YOU'!

As we can all recall, in late February & early March the worrying signs of a dangerous infection spreading throughout the community were increasing every day. The prospect of restrictions on our everyday lives was becoming closer. The church began planning to establish a group of volunteers to support our members, and on 18th March our team, subsequently titled "Helping Hands", was created. The first lockdown came in to force on 26th March and the team was soon in action. Nine months later the team is still out and about supporting members of our congregation!

During these nine months, twenty-one Helping Hands volunteers and eight members of a pastoral support team have provided a comprehensive support network to the congregation. We have recorded over 350 individual occasions where volunteers have delivered prescriptions, brought in shopping

and provided valuable telephone support. This is undoubtedly an underestimate since helpers and members soon established personal relationships, exchanged phone numbers, so many later instances of support became quite informal and the need for central coordination reduced.

While obtaining prescriptions, grocery shopping, telephone support and delivering the EKO magazine made up the majority of the calls to the volunteers, some of the more unusual requests were for help with moving furniture, repairing a fence, fixing a leaky tap, exchanging jigsaws and repairing a heating system.

For all of this commitment over the past months we, as a congregation, are greatly indebted to the following for their unstinting response to this crisis and the generous offer of their time and talents :

Helping Hands

Tracy Brown	Janice Gourlay	Iain Shaw
Hazel Brown	Norma Penman	Maziar Ronagh
Tom Moan	Gillian Alexander	Pamela Fraser
Gavin Bryans	Karen Malcolm	Lauren Henderson
Scott Stevens	Bill Arthur	Elizabeth Newlands
Morvern Anderson	Jean Craig	Karin Stewart
David Lawson	Ian Allan	Laura Hart

Pastoral Support

Stewart Smith	Beth Clark	Fiona Anderson
Sheena Bell	Joyce Bretrell	Anne Paton
Marion Leddie	Jeanette Lawson	

On behalf of the Kirk Session and congregation may I offer our heartfelt appreciation for all you have done to support the congregation at a time when practical and spiritual support and simple friendship were so greatly needed.

Alistair Walker

Session Clerk



LEPROSY MISSION SUNDAY – 31st JANUARY 2021

For many years, East Kilbride Old Parish has been a steady supporter of the work of the Leprosy Mission. Our normal pattern is to observe World Leprosy Day on the last Sunday January, which is the day appointed for it worldwide. In 2021, that means Sunday 31st January.

In all likelihood, we'll still be under some level of restriction by the end of January, so the Church service that day will be a virtual one. The Gospel reading has even been chosen! Have a look at St Mark chapter 1, verses 40-45. What we normally do at the service is give out Gift Envelopes, which people can return with a donation on any Sunday throughout February. We can't do that this time.

What I suggest is that if anyone wants to give a donation, please send a cheque to Des Lavery. His address is 36 Bourtree Road, Hamilton ML3 8PT. Make the cheque out to "*East Kilbride Old Parish Church*" and on the back, write "*Leprosy Mission*".

If anyone would rather donate via a Bank Transfer, please phone Des on 07402192610, and he will give you the necessary details.

There's one other thing to mention. A number of people very kindly have used the Blue Tubs at home, into which money is put, and when full, these are usually brought to the Church, where I collect them and then send off the money to TLM Scotland in Stirling. We haven't been able to do that since last March. However, if anyone has such a Tub and would like its contents sent on, please let me know. (The same might well apply to the small Christian Aid Boxes). Depending on the regulations, we can make a suitable arrangement. Call me on 226718. And for more information about leprosy and the great work of the Mission, have a look at TLM Scotland's website at www.leprosymission.scot

Stewart Smith



PRAYER DIARY

The prayer group continues to take your prayer requests to our Heavenly Father.

“Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his mercy is forever sure.”

1st. Lord, we give thanks for our advent and Christmas services, and as we go into a new year, we pray for God's blessing on Anne our minister and all who prepare, lead and broadcast our worship services.

2nd. We pray for all who are struggling financially, because of the virus.

3rd. Thank you, Lord, for being our strength and comfort in these days.

4th. Father help us to use our words to encourage people and lift them up.

5th. Lord we pray that 2021 will see us able to control covid19.

6th. January 6th is epiphany, read the story of the Magi in St. Mathews gospel chapter 2, versus 1-12, and pray that the light of Christ may shine across the world, and in our own hearts.

7th. Never doubt the power of prayer.

8th. I thank you Lord, for the food on my table as I remember the hungry and less fortunate.

9th. Lord 2020 has been a hard year, please keep my friends and family safe, blessed and protected during the new year.

10th. Father, thank you that you always love us.

11th. Do not fear the future, for God is with us.

12th. Please guide my thoughts, words and actions Lord, so that I can walk your path of peace and love.

13th. Jesus's birth is not just for one nation or culture, it is good news for the whole earth, a reason for all ethnicity to rejoice.

14th. Lord, help us to feel close to you no matter what is going on in our lives.

- 15th.Thank you, Lord, for changing the seasons and for the beauty they bring.
- 16th.We bring you Lord, all medics who are again finding things very difficult and give them courage and strength.
- 17th.We remember with gratitude and give thanks for any good news we received or read about in recent days.
- 18th.Open my eyes Lord and engage my vision.
- 19th.Father help me to relax so that I can identify your plan for me during this time.
- 20th.Lord, thank you for the sacrifice you made so that I may have freedom of life.
- 21st.We pray for wisdom in governments world-wide.
- 22nd.Open my mind Lord, deepen my faith.
- 23rd.Lord, you are so patient with us, help us also to be patient.
- 24th.Whatever we face He is with us and He has the power to calm the storm.
- 25th.January 25th is Burns Day, think of a part of the world where there is violence and oppression and pray that God's peace will come and "man to man"....shall brothers be or rather "human being to human being"...shall friends be.
- 26th.Open my heart Lord and increase my faith.
- 27th.Father, please help and comfort everyone who is finding it hard to cope with mental health issues, through the loneliness of these times.
- 28th.Trust God to understand.
- 29th.Father, help us to remember to say thank you and give you praise when things are going well in our lives.
- 30th.May the blessing of light be upon us, light without and light within.
- 31st.January 31st is World Leprosy Day. Give thanks for the work of the Leprosy Mission Scotland and pray that despite the virus the work bringing healing and new hope to people affected by leprosy may continue strongly in 2021.

CHRISTMAS GIFT BAGS

We are all aware of the impact of the current pandemic on our usual personal arrangements to meet families and friends and share the enjoyment and fun of the Christmas season. The current restrictions mean many people will be missing the fellowship of regular worship while others may be unwell, infirm or lonely. We therefore decided a few weeks ago to prepare little gift bags for distribution to the many members for whom this Christmas may be more difficult than usual because of limitations on the opportunity to enjoy Christmas celebrations.

With a small team of dedicated shoppers led by Norma Penman and Jeanette Lawson, the collection of names of members from Anne our Minister, Stewart Smith and our Pastoral Team, nominations from elders, organisation and administration by Iain Shaw and Louise Reilly, little pots with spring bulbs from Rainbows, Brownies & Guides organised by Christine Tweedie, and the assistance of Helping Hands, last weekend we delivered 126 Christmas gift bags to members at home and in care homes throughout East Kilbride and surrounding areas. The bags included shortbread or fruit loaf, a Christmas cracker, a Christmas card, a decoration for the Christmas tree, a lovely message from Anne and the obligatory chocolates – it wouldn't be Christmas without chocolate !

We hope this little gesture helps keep our congregation together and that we remember and support others less fortunate than ourselves as we begin to look forward to a time when we can socialise and worship in our accustomed ways.

Alistair Walker



UPDATE FROM IAIN SHAW



At Christmas we remember a tiny baby, born in obscurity to young parents, far from home, in less-than-ideal circumstances. But in those less-than-ideal circumstances God's eternal plan was being revealed. Worked out through ordinary people who made space to listen and to respond to the words of God. That tiny, naked, vulnerable baby was the pinnacle of the salvation plan of God. God, come to earth to save us all. Angels watched with wonder as God humbled himself and became human to save a rebellious humanity.

Our circumstances today may be less than ideal. We may still be missing people and traditions that usually made Christmas special for us. But if the Christmas story teaches us anything it is that God continues to work and to act, even when we can't quite see it. Even when all around looks like chaos and no one is where they want to be due to following the rules (remember that census that sent everyone far from home) God works and shows his amazing love for us.

At the start of a new year, we tend to reflect on the year just ended and our hopes, dreams and ambitions for 2021. My hope for the coming year is that you will all find the hope that Jesus offers – the hope that lasts forever no matter what life throws at you.

At the beginning of 2020 I suggested taking an empty jar and at the end of

each week in 2020 add a note with a good thing that happened that week then on New Year's Eve empty the jar and read the notes to remind yourself of what an amazing year you had – I wonder if anyone actually did this and if so what kind of year did you have in 2020 - Strange and unpredictable but hopefully full of good happy memories as well.

In December we held several successful events for children, young people & families. These were well supported and enjoyed by those who attended. These included our Sunday School Family Quiz night which attracted 11 teams with the winning team being the Christmas Crackers (The Colthart team captained by Molly) in 2nd place was Santa Paws (The Ashelby Family captained by Millie) & in 3rd place The Noel it All's (The Madden Family captained by Jessica) we will leave it at that and not mention who was award-ded the wooden spoon; "shall we Jill & Alan?".



We held our annual Family Christingle Service on zoom, with 25 families from the Rainbows. Brownies & Guides joining our own Sunday School, Messy Church & Youth Group families. For the first time children enjoyed Christmas Story Time with Santa which also included games & singing. This was a great success and was enjoyed by the 15 children who attended.

Virtual Sunday School continues weekly with a mixture of sharing time, games, puzzles, singing, arts & crafts as well as Bible teaching and prayer. Our QR codes Nativity trail was well received as local families searched shop windows in the Village area and found out more about the first Christmas Story.

It was also great to involve 22 children and their families in lighting of the advent candles and reading the Advent liturgies and scripture.

All in all, this has been an extremely busy yet successful and enjoyable time and I extend my grateful thanks to everyone involved.

There is much planned for the early part of 2021 and more details of these events and activities will appear in next month's EKO magazine.

2020 was a strange and difficult year, and yet it has also been a year when the promises of God have remained true and God has remained, as always, present amongst the chaos. As we move into 2021 always try to look for signs of God's love. Remember his greatest gift, Jesus, and remember that nothing can separate us from his love.

Thank you all for your continued prayers, support and encouragement. In closing I pray that you will all stay safe, healthy and continue to be kind and look after one another.

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and I wish you all a safe. peaceful & Covid free New Year.

Jain (Youth & Families Worker) mobile **07912 295943** /

email jainshaw18@gmail.com





Just for your info - In the pictures are Kaja, Sophie & Max, Zoe, Laura (with Alfie the Cockapoo) and a picture of the Christingles made by the Smith family.

17th EK RAINBOWS AND BROWNIES

We have continued to keep in touch with all our girls through Zoom and like most people, it has encouraged us all to learn new IT skills. The girls have been busy with various activities;

Christmas crafts - the girls all received craft packs before our Zoom event where they made advent Santa Calendars, gift tags, decorated baubles, cards etc. I would like to thank all our leaders for their support and sharing some of their craft ideas with us all.

Panto - the girls took part in not one but two panto's this year via Zoom. Girlguiding gave us Sisterhood in the Wood, a little bit like Babes in the Wood but not a traditional panto. On asking the girls for feedback, one of the Brownies said not enough "behind yous" or booing and hissing but she did give it 7 out of 10. Then along came Jack and the Beanstalk more traditional but still didn't make up for our annual visit to The Village Theatre to see the EK Rep Panto.

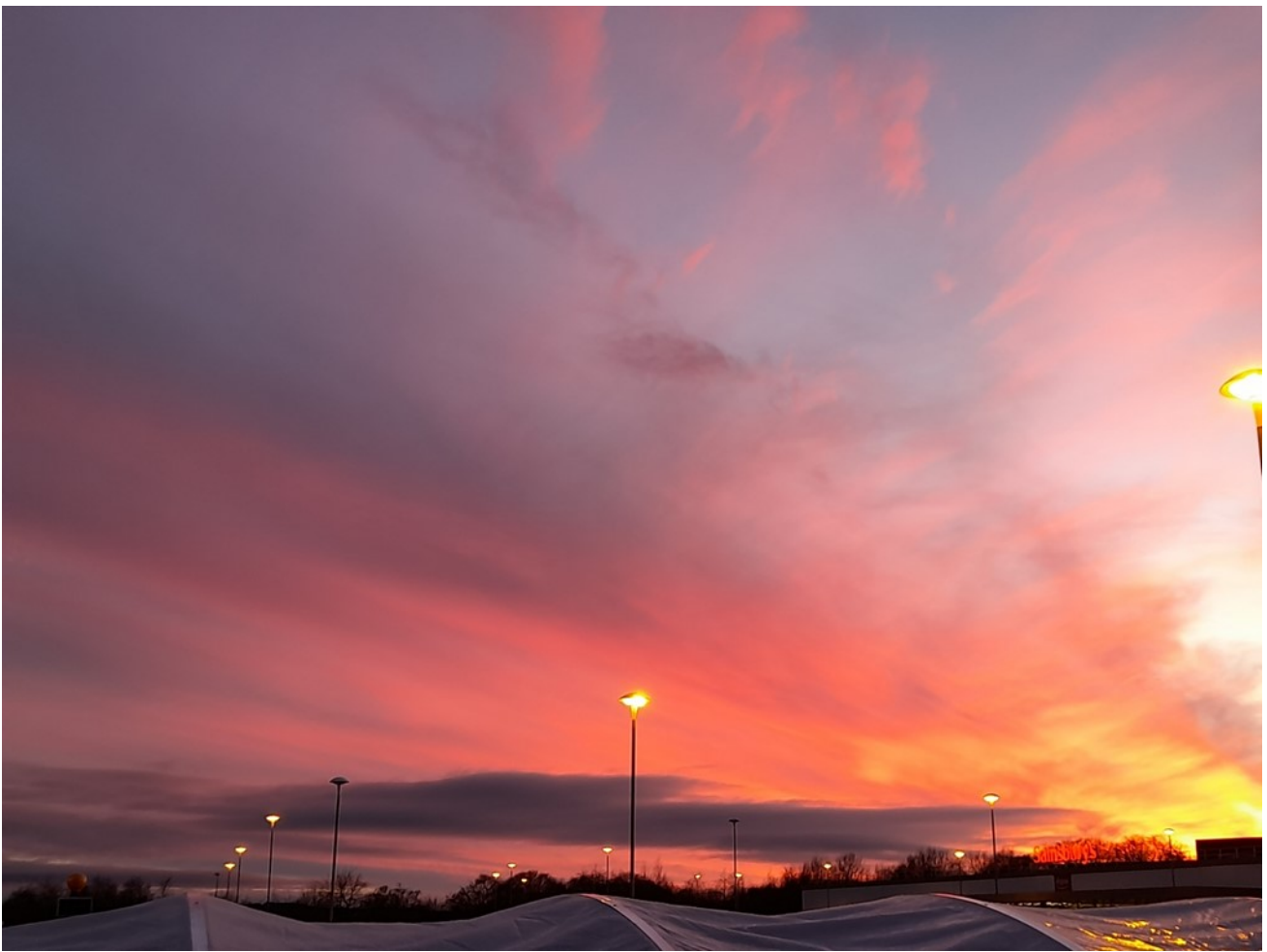
Christingle Sunday 20th Dec 4pm - this for me is one of these moments when I feel the Christ Child is on the way. Anne very kindly hosts an annual Christingle for all our Guiding units. This year again via Zoom we joined with our Sunday School families and put some light into the world at this darkest time. A huge thank you to the Kelly girls for reading and Iain Shaw for pulling everything together plus wonder hymns.

Glebe St Garden - my plans to have all the childrens' decorated stones into the garden has failed to happen but I promise they will appear there early January. So you don't miss out please see a sneak preview below.

Despite everything happening in the world at the moment, we can never be separated from Gods love or the wonder and splendour of his creation in all its glory as displayed tonight at Kingsgate (picture on the next page).

On behalf of all the girls and leaders we wish all our Church Family a safe and more settled 2021.

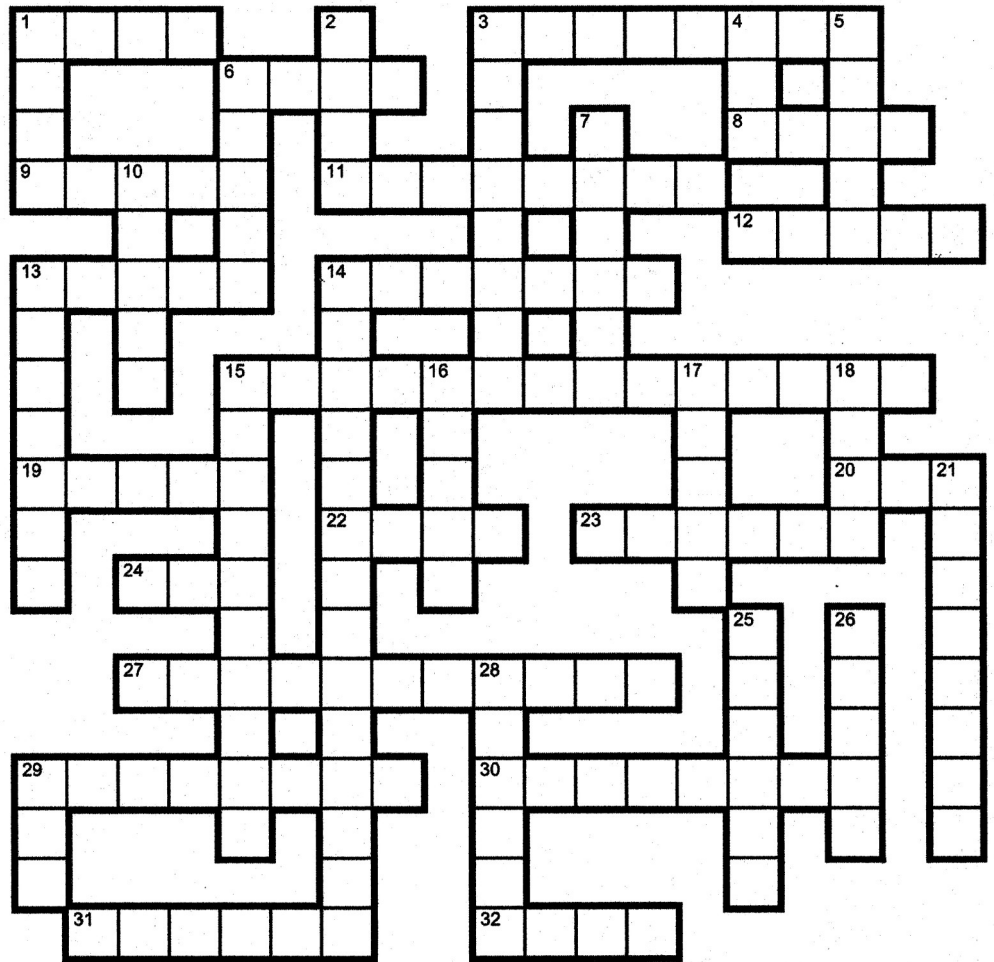
Christine Tweedie - 17th EK Rainbows & Brownies plus All our wonderful Owls xx



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Transportation for going over snow (4)
- 3 Mixture of seasoned ingredients (8)
- 6 Baby's bed (4)
- 8 Period from December 24th to January 6th (4)
- 9 Red-breasted bird (5)
- 11 Twelve days after Christmas (8)
- 12 Alcoholic drink normally served in a bowl (5)
- 13 Jolly (5)
- 14 News (7)
- 15 Goes with the turkey (9,5)
- 19 A type of tree used at Christmas (5)
- 20 The colour of Santa's hat (3)
- 22 ____ log; traditonally burned at Christmas (4)
- 23 Sanctified (6)
- 24 Cured leg of pork (3)
- 27 Christmas song (6,5)
- 29 Found under the Christmas tree? (8)
- 30 Grace (8)
- 31 Snow falls in this season (6)
- 32 Given at Christmas (4)

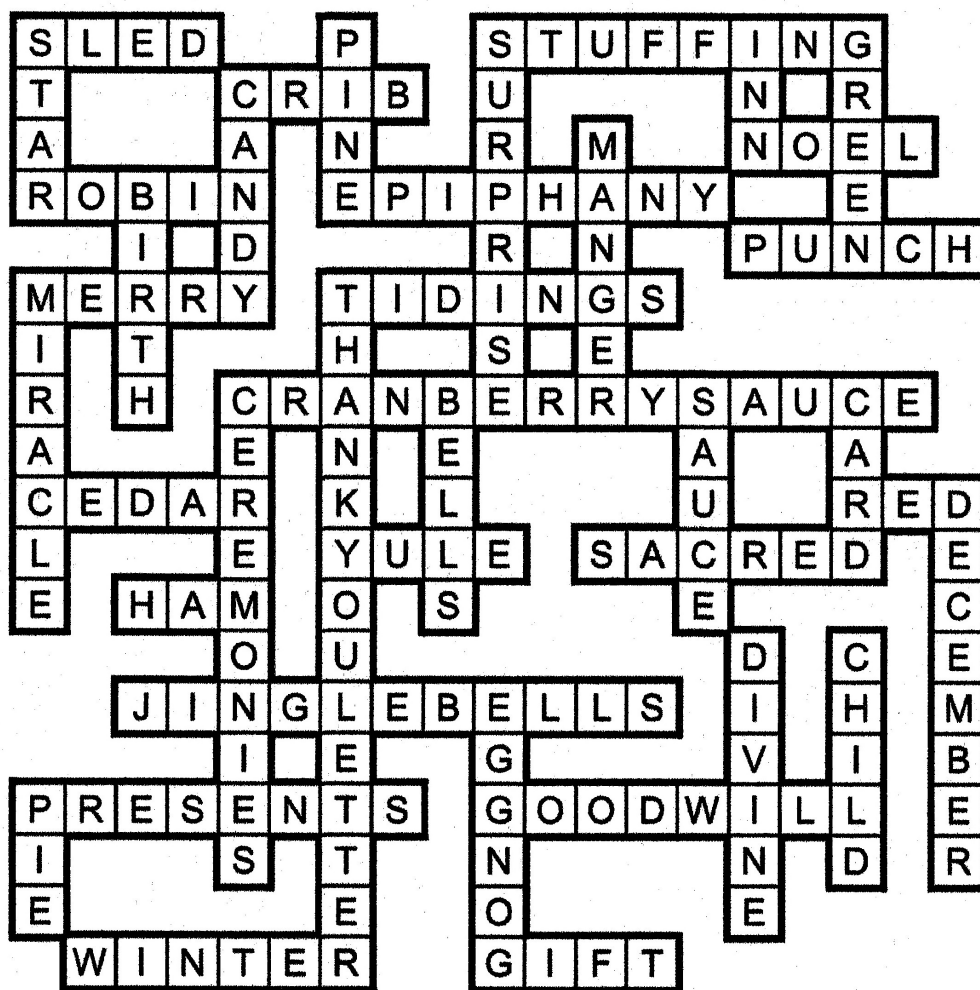


BiblePuzzles.org.uk

Down

- 1 Bright celestial body (4)
- 2 Christmas tree type (4)
- 3 Take aback (8)
- 4 No room here! (3)
- 5 Elvish colour (5)
- 6 Sweets; flavoured sugar (5)
- 7 Container usually found in a stable (6)
- 10 Beginning of life (5)
- 13 Amazing event (7)
- 14 Written after Christmas? (5,3,6)
- 15 Formal events (10)
- 16 Ring out from churches (5)
- 17 Accompaniment for food (5)
- 18 Printed or written greeting (4)
- 21 Month in which Christmas falls (8)
- 25 Nature of God (6)
- 26 One was born in Bethlehem (5)
- 28 Sweetened milk drink, with eggs and alcohol (6)
- 29 Pastry dish (3)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION



Across: 1 Sled, 3 Stuffing, 6 Crib, 8 Noel, 9 Robin, 11 Epiphany, 12 Punch, 13 Merry, 14 Tidings, 15 Cranberry sauce, 19 Cedar, 20 Red, 22 Yule, 23 Sacred, 24 Ham, 27 Jingle Bells, 29 Presents, 30 Goodwill, 31 Winter, 32 Gift.

Down: 1 Star, 2 Pine, 3 Surprise, 4 Inn, 5 Green, 6 Candy, 7 Manger, 10 Birth, 13 Miracle, 14 Thank you letter, 15 Ceremonies, 16 Bells, 17 Sauce, 18 Card, 21 December, 25 Divine, 26 Child, 28 Eggnog, 29 Pie.

PASTORAL REGISTER

Deaths: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Bill McEwan

Elsie Crozier

Maisie Morrison



EKO SUBMISSION DATE

If you would normally hand write/type material and give it to the editor would you please phone me and dictate it. My numbers are below.

The deadline for submitting all material for the February edition of the EKO is:

Wednesday 27th January

Thank you. *David Kent* - Editor



EAST KILBRIDE OLD PARISH CHURCH

In case of illness and bereavement, would the family please contact the minister immediately and directly.

Rev. Anne Paton will be available for consultation in the vestry after Sunday morning worship. Please arrange such consultation with the door duty team.

East Kilbride Old Parish Church, Church of Scotland, Scottish Charity—SC000609

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Treasurer **Mr Ronnie Niven**

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