

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

We continue to meet for 20 minutes of collective silent prayer in the Mitchell Chapel every peace lives within us and is for sharing with all.

Parish Grouping – What's On:

ST STEPHENS

Mondays - new dance class for 55+, 10.30-11.30 - £20.00 per month

Wednesdays- Chatterbox - drop in cafe 10am-12noon

OLDMACHAR

Fridays - Community Cafe 10am-12noon. Adults £4.00 Children £2.00 which includes unlimited tea, coffee and snacks.

1st Saturday of every month - Ladies breakfast 9-10.30am - a relaxed friendly breakfast with a guest speaker chatting for a short while.

St Machar's Cathedral

Sunday 15th December 2024

SERVICES

Sunday 22nd December 2024 11am Morning Worship with Rev Sarah Brown
6pm Evening Worship with Rev Sarah Brown

Tuesday 24th December 2024 6pm Christingle

Tuesday 24th December 2024 11pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 25th December 2024 11am Morning Worship with Rev Sarah Brown

Sunday 29th December 2024 11am Morning Worship with Rev Sarah Brown
There will be no evening service

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Office (Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri am): 01224 485988 – office@stmachar.com

Minister: Rev Sarah Brown – sarah.brown@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk: Alan Grant – a.bryce.grant47@gmail.com

***** CATHEDRAL EVENTS and CONCERTS *****

You are invited to stay for coffee/tea which will be served in the side aisle after the service.

FORTHCOMING SERVICES IN THE CATHEDRAL

6.00pm this evening – Blue Christmas Service

12.00 on Friday – Midday Prayers

11.00 am and 6.00 pm next Sunday – services led by the Rev Sarah Brown

CATHEDRAL SHOP



Have a look at the Cathedral Shop after the service – we have a new series of cards depicting the pulpit falls made by Ruth Lough. We have copies of the Friends of St Machar's book – A Living History.

We also have Christmas Cards, ornaments, chocolates, jewellery, scarves, 2025 calendars and various other gift ideas.

BIBLE STUDY 2025

We are beginning a new bible study on the 2nd Sunday of the month in 2025, beginning in January. This will hopefully be an opportunity to deepen your faith by exploring scripture together. It will be chance to stretch our imaginations and build friendships.

Dates for your diary will be:

12th January; 9th February; 9th March; (no April meeting); 11th May; 8th June; (no meetings in July and August); 14th September; 12th October; 9th November and 14th December.

The group will meet in the Mitchel Chapel at 12.30pm for an hour. All are welcome to attend.

If you have suggestions of topics/texts you would like to explore or would like to assist in leading one of the weeks please let me know.

Rev Sarah Brown

CROSS REACH INITIATIVE

The woman's group are appealing for donations of any unwanted wool and buttons to enable us to knit Twiddle Muffs. These are for use with some patients in local care homes. Wool can be left at the shop The knitting pattern is available in the cathedral if any knitters would like to help.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMETABLE

As we enter Advent, you may wish to note the following special services:

Sunday 15th December 6pm: Blue Christmas Service

Christmas can be a struggle some years because of all kinds of things. Sometimes a change or a challenge, a bereavement or a break-up can make Christmas feel full on cheer, when that's not where you are at. For others, it's taking time to remember a loved one who is absent at Christmas for whatever reason and having space to acknowledge the empty chair.

Please come along if you would like a more gentle space to welcome the season of Christmas, do come if you would like to be there to support others who are having a hard time this year.

Christmas Eve 6pm Christingle Service The usual popular family service, with lots of activities and participation for children.

Christmas Eve 11pm: Watchnight Service The traditional service of readings and carols as we await the coming of Christmas.

Christmas Day 11am Communion Service

THE ABERDEEN ACADEMY OF THEOLOGY

The next series of Aberdeen Academy of Theology workshops will be led by Dr Sara Mannen, the McDonald-Agape Research Fellow in Systematic Theology at the University of Aberdeen, and will be on the theme of God's power.

The sessions will be held on 18 January, 15 February, and 15 March from 9:30am-12:30pm at the Fountainhall Church Centre in Aberdeen. It would be great to see many of you there! If you know in advance that you're coming it would be great to have an RSVP so I can arrange catering accordingly. There's a charge of £10 (conc) / £15 for each workshop to cover hall rental and food.

Here's a brief summary of the themes that will be addressed:

We live in a world plagued with questions of power and its abuses. As we read the news and reckon with our reality, we often ask: Who has power? Who doesn't have power? How do we properly address and prevent the misuse of power? However, the most basic question is rarely addressed and answered: What is power? This series seeks to answer this question by theologically reflecting on and exploring the biblical text and the Christian tradition's understanding of God as the All-Powerful or Omnipotent One so that we can better engage the issue of power in the church and world.

November /December Education Officer News

Primary school visits are booked for December with the Advent theme of preparation for Christ's birth. Younger children will be making stars with a stained-glass look using tissue paper and sweetie wrappers, whilst older primary students will make a festive wreath with advent candles from coloured paper and felt decorations.

Secondary School During November we welcomed History students from St Machar's Academy to view the poppy display, commonwealth graves and discover how we remember others in our church. Their Eco Group came to learn about promoting biodiversity in the kirkyard and pupils sowed yellow rattle seeds along the path to the cathedral. This plant feeds off the nutrients in the roots of grasses allowing wildflowers more space to spread, as well as having attractive yellow flowers and rattling seed-heads. Harlaw Academy photographers from S5 and S6 are visiting and we are hoping to display some of their images early next year.

School challenge A Follow that Star design challenge has gone out to all schools in the city and shire to create and decorate stars for display over the Christmas and Epiphany period.

Family activities There will be a Christmas themed trail in the Cathedral of clay characters and images from the Nativity for young people to hunt throughout December and early January. A school holiday session is planned for Thursday 2nd January 11.30-14.00 so do bring your families along for tours, crafts and trails.

Cathedral Crafters – We had a convivial meeting on Monday 25th November preparing the prayer corner for Christmas. This will be added to during December – thanks to all who are taking part.

Kirkyard Thanks to our hardy gardeners, crocus and muscari bulbs have been planted – luckily before the snow came. We have had an offer of gardening tools from the City Council but if anyone has spares, they will be gratefully received.

Katherine Williams education@stmachar.com

ADVENT FOODBANK COLLECTION

A number of people have been asking what is happening with the Advent Foodbank Collection. Many of you will remember that it has been our custom to have a collection over Advent for one of our Foodbank partners, recently Instant Neighbour.

In recent years, the collection started on the first Sunday of Advent, run through Christmas and end in mid-January. That, on reflection, we feel is a long time for a collection to continue, particularly at a time when there are so many other calls made on the generosity of the congregation, and we feel that the Foodbank collection did not get the focus it deserves. So, this year we are trying a shorter period, beginning **next Sunday 22nd December** and continuing to **Sunday 19th January**. We remain convinced that the period after Christmas, when all available cash has been spent, is a particularly bleak period for those who are struggling with money.

The usual trugs will make their appearance at the West End on 22nd December, and we will be looking for, as usual, tins of meat, soup, vegetables and breakfast food. In addition, toiletries of all kinds would be appreciated. Once again, it will be in support of Instant Neighbour, and once again, we can look forward to your generous support.

USED STAMPS



As the Christmas cards start arriving, a gentle reminder to collect the stamps so that money can be raised in aid of smaller charities supported by the Church of Scotland.

There is a basket in the west end of the Cathedral for your contributions.

WEDNESDAY WORSHIP AT KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL

All are invited to join in the services of Wednesday Worship at 5.15 pm each week in term time in the University Chapel.

Do come along and enjoy this time of spiritual nourishment, which is followed by tea/coffee and biscuits - sustenance for the body as well as the soul!

PREPARE THE WAY OF GOD!

Prepare the way of God!
Make straight the royal way.
A choir of voices shall proclaim
the advent of God's day.

Each valley shall be filled,
and hill and mount made low.
The crooked places shall be straight,
and smooth the roughest road.

A single voice shall cry
upon the Jordan's shore
and speak the words that bring new life
to us, for evermore.

Prepare the way of God!
Make straight the royal way.
A choir of voices shall proclaim
the advent of God's day.

text: Michael Jacob Kooiman (tune: Franconia)

WILD AND LONE THE PROPHET'S VOICE

Wild and lone the prophet's voice
echoes through the desert still,
calling us to make a choice,
bidding us to do God's will:
'Turn from sin and be baptized;
cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Quitting all the sins you prized,
yield your life to God's control.'

'Bear the fruit repentance sows:
lives of justice, truth, and love.
Trust no other claim than those;
set your heart on things above.
Soon the Lord will come in power,
burning clean the threshing floor:
Then will flames the chaff devour;
wheat alone shall fill God's store.'

With such preaching stark and bold
John proclaimed salvation near,
and his timeless warnings hold
words of hope to all who hear.
So we dare to journey on,
led by faith through ways untrod,
till we come at last like John
to behold the Lamb of God.

text: Carl P Daw; © 1989 Hope Publishing Company (tune: Aberystwyth)

MY SOUL CRIES OUT

Canticle of the Turning

Author: Rory Cooney

Tune: STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn!

2. Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn.

3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn.

4. Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around.