

## 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.

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### 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 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2024

	SERVICES
<b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>	6pm Christingle
<b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>	11pm Festival Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
<b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>	11am Morning Worship with Rev Sarah Brown
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>	11am Morning Worship with Rev Sarah Brown There will be no evening service
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>	11am Sacrament of Holy Communion with Rev Sarah Brown 6pm Evening Worship with Rev Sarah Brown

#### OUR CONTACT DETAILS

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

Minister: Rev Sarah Brown – [sarah.brown@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:sarah.brown@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Session Clerk: Alan Grant – [a.bryce.grant47@gmail.com](mailto: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 – Evening Service with Holy Communion

6.00pm 24th December – Christingle

11.00pm 24th December – Watchnight Service

11.00am 25th December – Sacrament of Holy Communion

12.00pm on Friday – Midday Prayers

11.00am next Sunday 29th December – Morning Worship

All conducted by 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

**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**

### 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 **today 22<sup>nd</sup> December** and continuing to **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> 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 are now in place in the West End, 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.

## **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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:education@stmachar.com)

### **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!

### **FLOWER FUND/CALENDAR 2025**

The flowers in the Cathedral, fresh on Sundays, are often commissioned by members of the congregation to commemorate an anniversary. If you would like to do that, consult the Flower Calendar (at the back, near the Beadle's chair) and enter your name. Nearer the time, Patricia Keith will contact you about your wishes. You may wish to do your flowers yourself: Pat will be delighted!

You may like the flowers in the church but not have an occasion to mark. Contributions to the Flower Fund are very welcome. The fund covers the 'blank' Sundays and the more lavish decoration for Easter, Christmas, and Harvest. To donate, speak to the Session Clerk, Patricia, or the Beadle

## New CD for sale in the shop

'Songs of Life' is a new CD recorded in the Cathedral last year by singer Katherine Williams – the Cathedral's Education Officer – with Dr Ben Marsden on Piano. The CD comprises repertoire from the French school of chanson by Fauré, Debussy and Poulenc, and the first recording of a song cycle written for Katherine – Animal Voices – by the former Director of Music Roger B. Williams.

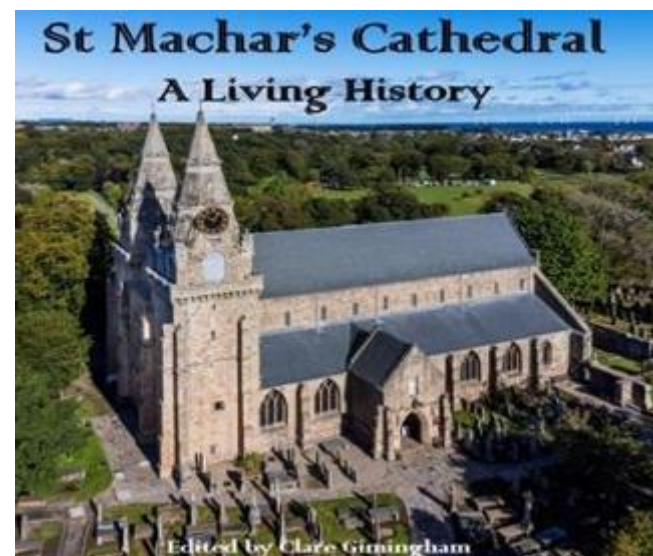
The album can be streamed on major platforms such as Spotify however shop purchases of the CD will help to support the Cathedral. A CD launch concert is planned for January.

Songs of Life

Katherine Williams    soprano  
Ben Marsden            piano

## FRIENDS OF ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL: "ST MACHAR'S – A LIVING HISTORY"

Stuck for ideas for that last minute present? Copies of the Friends' recently published book "St Machar's Cathedral – A Living History" are available in the shop at the cost of £17.99, with a discounted price of £15.99 for members of the Friends of St Machar's Cathedral. A must read for all those who, for whatever reason, hold this special place in their hearts.



## GOD OF JUSTICE

God of justice ever flowing,  
righteousness beyond degree,  
breath of mercy ever blowing  
through our world to set us free:  
you have lifted up the humble  
and the thrones of power cast down,  
caused the proud of heart to stumble,  
sent a child to wear a crown.

Coming as a tiny baby,  
giving up your power and might,  
so in tenderness we may be  
moved to justice, love and light:  
help us see in every child  
that the Christ child dwells within,  
calls us to be reconciled,  
leads to justice, frees from sin.

Some may celebrate with presents;  
some may greet the day through tears.  
Still in all, your holy presence  
gladdens hearts, casts out our fears.  
Teach us how to live more simply,  
that we all may simply live,  
caring for the poor and lonely,  
in Christ's name our love to give.

*Text: Kathleen R Moore (b.1951)*  
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*Tune: Holy Manna (CH4 655)*

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