

the Saint
Andrew



Photograph Shewantha Rodrigo

Handpainted Madonna and Child embellished with gold leaf at the side altar of the Dormition Cathedral, Sergiyev

Church of Scotland – Presbyterian

For private circulation only



SAINT
ANDREW'S
SCOTS KIRK
COLOMBO SRI LANKA

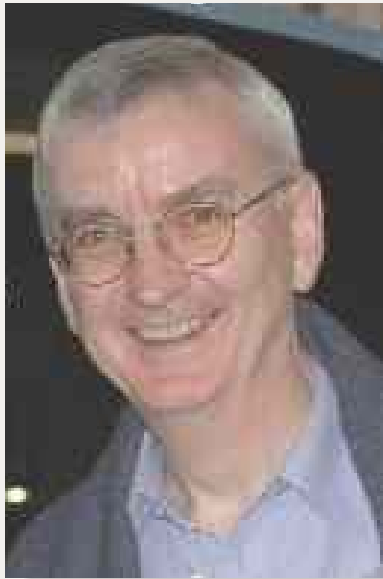
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Letter from the Minister



Dear friends at St Andrew's Scots Kirk,

By the time you read this, I may well be - or have been - back in Colombo. My visit will include Sunday 11 November, when we will celebrate together - on exactly the right day - the 100th Anniversary of the first Armistice commemorating the end of the First World War, and Sunday 18 November, when we will celebrate an "early" St Andrew's Day. During that latter service, we will also dedicate two new Communion Cups, kindly offered to us by Netherlee Church in Glasgow, to replace some that had, sadly, reached the end of their useful life in Colombo. (I remember Kumar warning me, during my last visit to Colombo, not to cut my lip on the edge of one that had been used for many years at St Andrew's Scots Kirk!)

Christmas is, of course, a special time in the Church calendar. In this increasingly secular world in which we live, Christmas - just like Easter, though to a greater extent - has become more of a consumer celebration than a Christian one. Nonetheless, we who love Christ and follow his teaching have great reason to celebrate his birth every 25 December. Christmas is a time to celebrate together, first of all with our families whenever we can, but also within our Christian communities.

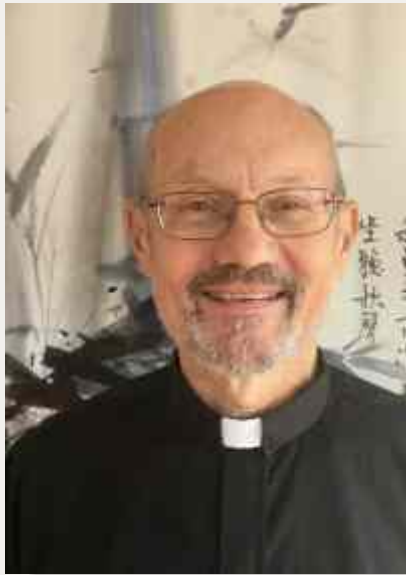
Here in Geneva, where I live, I have no immediate family but I have, over the past 12 years, hosted a special lunch at our church on Christmas Day especially for other people who don't have family locally and may otherwise find themselves alone on that day. We usually have somewhere between 30-40 people who attend - and, increasingly, some families come and join our celebrations. So please do remember those who may be alone - and possibly a bit lonely - on Christmas Day this year, as we celebrate together the birth of our Lord Jesus.

You will, of course, have Revd Bill Davnie with you as Locum Minister over the Christmas period. I am delighted that Bill and his wife Charlotte have agreed to return to serve at St Andrew's Scots Kirk for some months and I know you will extend to them a warm welcome.

I wish all of you a very happy Christmas and all God's blessings as we move towards a new and exciting year 2019.

(Revd) Jim Sharp
Interim Moderator

Rev. Bill Davnie is our Locum Pastor



Greetings to St. Andrew's Scots Kirk,

You will likely be reading this about the same time I take up my responsibilities as your locum pastor for SASK in late November. My wife Charlotte and I are greatly looking forward to our time in Sri Lanka. It is quite a change of scenery and weather for us from our home in Minnesota, U.S.A., up in the north where temperatures are already below zero Celsius and will stay there for some months! But after several previous visits to Colombo we won't be surprised by those differences. I expect there will be many other surprises, and much to learn, but those are exactly why we are excited to have this longer time with you.

I began my professional life as a Presbyterian pastor in the United States, but then joined the diplomatic service of the US, a path which took us to posts in east and southeast Asia, and later in the Soviet Union and its descendant countries. Our two daughters were with us during much of that time, until they headed off to university and their own careers. Our younger daughter lives with her husband in Florida, and works as a nurse-educator at a large hospital. Our older daughter is right here in Colombo, along with her husband and our two six-year-old granddaughters. You would certainly be correct if you assume we are looking forward to extra time with the little girls!

After retiring from the Foreign Service, we moved to Minnesota, where we have family ties. For a number of years, I served as Stated Clerk of the local Presbytery. I chose to leave that position recently, which allows me now to commit the coming months to the locum position.

You may recall that I was with you leading Holy Week services in 2017. Through that experience and other times here at worship, I have been greatly impressed by the commitment of SASK members and the Kirk Session to sustaining the life and work of this congregation during this prolonged vacancy in the pulpit. Simply maintaining the worship life of the congregation would challenge any church. The Kirk Session has successfully accomplished that, while it and the congregation as a whole have also maintained continuing work at Netherlee Cottage, with the Helping Hands program, and even adding recently a luncheon program. I look forward to supporting these efforts in the coming months.

The experience of Christian life in Sri Lanka likely differs in many ways from that of my home country, the United States. I hope you will share your experiences with me, and help me shape my preaching to the needs and goals of this congregation in this place. To help in that, I will welcome those who wish to join me in a Bible study looking at the upcoming Scripture readings, and pondering with me how they speak to life and conditions here in Colombo.

But first we have the joyous time of Advent and Christmas before us. May we all gather to hear familiar texts and sing favorite hymns as we once again reflect on the entry of God into the world as one of us, our brother Jesus, whom we have come to know as the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah.

Grace and peace,
Bill

Revd. Bill Davnie – Short Takes!



Family

Wife Charlotte, Daughters Andrea and husband Dallas in Tampa Florida and Liz and her husband Andy living in Sri Lanka. Granddaughters Katelyn and Lia

Alma mater

Wabash College – Indiana USA, BA
Vanderbilt University Divinity School, M Div
National Defense University, MS

Born in

North Dakota USA
Grew up in
Minnesota and Wisconsin USA

Career

Presbyterian Pastor, North Dakota USA 1976- 81
Foreign Service Officer (Diplomat) 1981-2007
Stated Clerk of Presbytery 2012-2017

Hobbies

Cooking, Bagpipes ("not practicing enough though"),
Reading

Can't do without

"I use to say coffee but I am becoming a tea drinker here in Sri Lanka!"

Favourite holiday

Sitting by a lake or a chance to see wild animals

Favourite food

All seafood "and anything I have not had before as I'm an adventurous eater."

Favourite music

American Folk and Bluegrass

Favourite time of day

Dusk when everything becomes black and white silhouettes

Turning point in life

"When Charlotte and I spent a year in Indonesia in 1974/5, the first time out of USA and discovered the challenges and excitement of living in another culture."

Loves

"Apart from my family, learning how life works in a new place."



Report from the Session Clerk



The International Presbytery (IP) meeting 12 to 14 October 2018 Amsterdam

Amsterdam is the most populous municipality in the Netherlands with a population of 2,410,960 in the Amsterdam metropolitan area. The city is also the cultural capital with many large Dutch institutions housing their headquarters and seven of the world's 500 largest companies, including Philips, AkzoNobel, TomTom and ING, based in the city. Uber, Netflix and Tesla have located their European headquarters in this city.

The 17th century is considered Amsterdam's Golden Age, during which it became the wealthiest city in the western world. Ships sailed from Amsterdam to the Baltic Sea, North America, and Africa, as well as present-day Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka and Brazil, forming the basis of a worldwide trading network. Amsterdam's merchants had the largest share in both the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch West India Company. These companies acquired overseas possessions that later became Dutch colonies.

Famous Amsterdam residents include the diarist Anne Frank, artists Rembrandt van Rijn and Vincent van Gogh, and philosopher Baruch Spinoza.

In 1578, the previously Roman Catholic city of Amsterdam joined the revolt against Spanish rule. Following the Dutch takeover, all churches were converted to Protestant worship. Calvinism became the dominant religion, and although Catholicism was not forbidden, the Catholic hierarchy was prohibited. This led to the establishment of covert churches, behind seemingly ordinary canal side house fronts.

The oldest English-language church congregation in the world outside the United Kingdom is found at the Begijnhof. Regular services there are still offered in English under the auspices of the Church of Scotland.

The Begijnhof is a group of historic buildings, mostly private dwellings. Today it is also the site of two churches, the Catholic Houten Huys and the English Reformed Church.



The Begijnhof is a group of historic buildings

Report from the Session Clerk



English Reformed Church

The meetings

The IP meeting was hosted by the English Reformed Church, whose minister – the Rev. Lance Stone – visited Colombo in June 2018 as a member of the LCR team.

On Friday 12th, the committees met. It was my first experience chairing the Finance Committee, whose main focus was the new Financial Regulation governing the IP. The new regulation will lead to many congregations paying 12x to 15x the amount paid before the regulations were passed.

The new regulations require the IP congregations to make an annual payment called M&R, which stands for Mission and Renewal. This payment is used to pay for ministers' training as well as contribute to the running costs of the General Assembly and certain departments at 121 George Street. The M&R charge is being phased over five years and there is a great deal of concern that this charge will be unaffordable to most of the IP congregations.

On Friday, the Business Committee led by the Rev. Aaron Stevens comprising the conveners of each committee as well as the Presbytery Clerk and Moderator of the IP met and finalized

the agenda of the main IP meeting. Among the decisions taken at this meeting and was to grant permission to the Colombo congregation to call a new minister.

The main IP meeting ran from 6 pm on Friday to 5 pm on Saturday. From our perspective the good news included the adoption of the toilet improvement project at Ward 8 Mulleriyawa as the Presbytery's fund-raising mission project. The business meeting concluded with a dinner for the forty delegates and spouses as well as members of the English Reformed Church, who supported the meetings with the provision of food, tea and coffee when needed.

Disaster for me

As we approached dinner at 7 pm, I took a stroll along one of the attractive canals, before entering the restaurant at about 10 minutes to the appointed hour. I had been pulling a stroller bag with my laptop, which I had brought with me for the Finance presentation I was to give at the meeting. I noticed that half the restaurant had been reserved for our group with place settings. Having found my place, I decided to leave my small bag in what I thought was a fairly invisible and discreet spot close to my place setting and joined the rest of the group at the bar.

As we took our seats for dinner some fifteen minutes later, I noticed my bag was missing. I assumed the restaurant staff had moved it. Following my inquiries, I discovered that the staff had not moved it nor seen it. and then it slowly dawned on me that it had probably been stolen. The horror of my loss began to seep in as I realized that I had also lost my travel pouch with passports, cash and driver's license. I was scheduled to fly back the next day to return home in the nick of time for my wife's birthday.

Not surprisingly I lost my appetite and the rest of the evening was a bit of a blur. It included a visit to the nearest Police Station to report the theft. To cut a long story short, my return was delayed by two days, during which time I obtained emergency passports from the British and Sri Lankan consulates.

It was a painful (and costly) lesson for me. I had not perceived the risk of theft from inside the restaurant and this has been a sobering and salutary lesson that you cannot be careful enough regardless of how safe you may think the environment is.

Chandan de Silva

Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's St. Andrew's Day Celebrations



18th of November at St. Andrew's was memorable for a number of reasons. It was the first day the congregation was introduced officially to its Locum Minister Rev. Bill Davnie, it was the day the communion cups gifted from Netherlee Church Scotland would be dedicated and it fittingly commemorated St. Andrew's Day.

With organist Neranjan De Silva pulling out all the stops in Scottish musical flavour with the prelude of Scotland the Brave played akin to bagpipes on the church organ, Rev. Jim Sharp our Interim Moderator began the service, starting off with the hymn, Sing of Andrew, John's Disciple. The music throughout was an essay to St Andrew's life. Communion was preceded with the dedication of the communion cups and concluded with the final hymn, When Jesus saw the fishermen by Edith Agnew sung to the Kingsfold melody from English Country Songs. The extraordinary bass voice of Eshantha De Andrado filled the church with the Flower of Scotland at the end of the service, bringing about a spontaneous ovation from the congregation.



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's New Communion Cups



We made a call to our partners in Scotland and Netherlee Church in Glasgow was keen to find new Communion Cups for St Andrew's. Communion Cups with a history were located at Cellardyke Church on the east coast of Scotland, north of Edinburgh and south of St Andrew's.

The Churches of Cellardyke and Anstruther had amalgamated and therefore, they had extra Communion Cups which they thought they would sell. When they learned the cups were for St Andrew's, Colombo they were happy to donate them to us.

Netherlee Church did however make a donation to Anstruther Church and had the cups engraved to celebrate their 90th Anniversary and the gift to Colombo.

They were dedicated to St Andrew's by Rev Jim Sharp on 18th November 2018.

The congregation of St Andrew's Scots Kirk would like to express their heartfelt thanks to Netherlee Church for constant support to Sri Lanka.

Earlier this year Rev Jim Sharp made a general call to the Elders about the need to replace our Communion Cups. We do not know how old they are but they could date from the time of the new building of St Andrew's on the Galle Road in 1907 or even prior to that when the first St Andrew's was built in the Pettah in 1841.

However, one is leaky and the other has a split at the lip of the cup. We have been using them very carefully at Communion Services and passing the cup to the next Elder facing the undamaged side forward.



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's

Songs of Britain No 2

Featuring Harin Amirthanathan, Johann Peiris
and Tilanka Jayamanne
Hosted at Westminster House in aid of Netherlee Cottage



The Association of British Residents presented Songs of Britain No 2 in the Lounge of Westminster House, the official residence of the British High Commissioner and hosted by His Excellency James Dauris and his wife Helen Dauris. 120 ABR members and their guests enjoyed the fluid notes of Harin Amirthanathan accompanied beautifully on the ivories by Johann Peiris, together with guest artiste flautist Tilanka Jayamanne.

Harin presented a pot pourri of music including Vedic hymns translated by the British composer Gustav Holst and four Cingalese Love Songs. This repertoire included two pieces each from Cinnamon Gardens composed by British composer Alison Travers and the musical "The Cingalee" and several pieces depicting Britain's musical locale in the 1940s.

Johann's dexterity on the piano was seen in, To a Wild Rose as was Tilanka's prowess on the flute, when he played a Concertino composed in 1902.

Charity donations were made to the Sir James and Lady Pieris Cheshire Home in Mount Lavinia, a Training Empowerment and Awareness project for poor schools in Kandy and our own Netherlee Cottage. The donation to Netherlee Cottage was to replace a leaking water tank and place it on a metal frame to improve the water pressure in the Cottage.

Gillian Mailer



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's

Feeding the Needy



St. Andrew's launched a Thursday Lunch Project to feed the needy in the area in October, which has seen the numbers coming into partake of this free lunch grow to almost 120 each week.

The diverse range of people enjoying not only lunch but an hour of fellowship is a rewarding exercise to be a part of. Volunteers are urgently required to be a part of the team of servers, who voluntarily give of their time, love and care to feed the needy from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm each Thursday.



Enjoying Their Twilight Years in Fellowship

The first meeting of the Senior Friends Fellowship was held on September 26th from 9.30 - 11.30 am in the Church Hall. Six senior members of St Andrew's were present to enjoy a morning of fun, unity and fellowship. The two hour programme commenced with the reading of two poems titled 'Good Health' and 'Old Songs' by Patience Strong, followed by a jolly sing-a-long. By popular request, there was also a Bible quiz and a memory game.

After refreshments, the party dispersed with a promise to meet again, possibly every last Wednesday of the month.

Lakshmi Seneviratne

(On behalf of the Senior Friends Fellowship Team)



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's

St Andrew's Scots Kirk Annual Bazaar



The Bazaar began with queues at the gate of the Church and two Elders trying to hold all our visitors back until opening time and thus the race began with everyone rushing to select the best bargains. The music was playing and the sun was shining.

The merriment began two weeks before with the Youth Group Car Wash on a Sunday morning. Whilst most of us are in Church, the Youth group were getting a little wet. Our cars looked like new afterwards. The Sunday School children had their Bake Sale after Church, the perfect accompaniment to the post-service tea and coffee. The funds raised are included in the Bazaar Income.

The tables of the white elephant stall were empty by 5 pm. The food stall had a slow start but our visitors turned their attention to food after they had snapped up their other purchases. Every pot of jam donated by A Bours and Co Ltd and a huge number of slices of cake donated by

Cinnamon Lakeside, Cinnamon Grand and the Shangri-La Hotel plus cakes and drinks made by the congregation and friends of St Andrew's were sold. The income from the books and DVD stall was enhanced by all the DVDs donated. The Netherlee stall in which the ladies had made many decorated bags, pinafores, pillow cases and rugs and their popular jewellery sales had great sales. The clothes stall had a strong offering of nearly new and new clothing. The Korean Church housed in three tents always do a fantastic job contributing to St Andrew's Annual Bazaar.

The income from this annual fund- raising event will be divided equally between St Andrew's in-house charities, Food for the Needy, Mulleriyawa Hospital, Helping Hands and Netherlee Cottage. Our thanks to everyone who, donated, contributed, helped and came to buy to make our bazaar a success.

Gillian Mailer



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's

St Andrew's Scots Kirk Annual Bazaar



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's

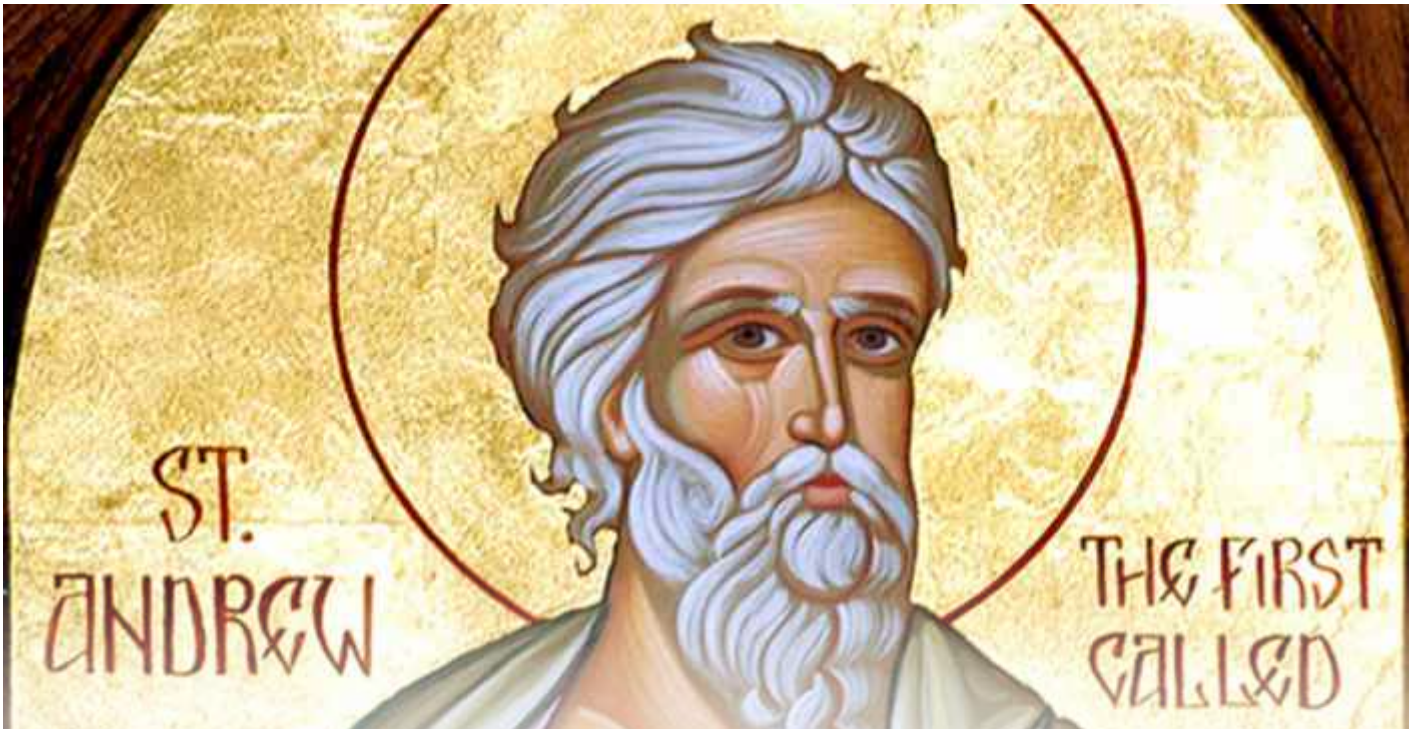
The Sunday School serves up yummys for the Bazaar through the Bake Sale



Through the lens – looking back at events at St. Andrew's Youth Group raises funds for Bazaar through Car Wash



Some little known facts about St. Andrew



He wasn't Scottish – he was born in Bethsaida Galilee and his remains were moved 300 years after his death to Constantinople.

He became the Patron Saint of Scotland only in 1320.

He was Jesus' first disciple – he was baptised by John the Baptist and it was he who brought his brother Simon Peter to Jesus. Andrew is known as Prōtoklētos – the first called.

He's the Patron Saint of not just Scotland but also Greece, Russia, Italy's Amalfi and Barbados.

He's also the Patron Saint of singers, unmarried women, fishmongers, fishermen, expectant women and the Order of the Thistle, the second highest rank of chivalry in the world.

It was he who pointed out the little boy with the five loaves and fish.

His missionary work was primarily in Scythia and Greece.

He was crucified on an X- shaped cross – on the 30th of November 60AD by order of the Roman Governor Aegaeus, on his request as he did not feel it worthy of dying on the same shape of cross as Jesus. The white X on the Scottish flags represents this.

He suffered for two days before his death on the cross – but even while on the cross, he continued to preach for those two days.

It is known that Aegaeus became mad after his death.

A piece of his shoulder blade is stored at St. Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh.

Obituary – Noel Wickramaratne



It is with great sadness that we heard of the demise of Noel Wickramaratne, a member of our congregation since the 1950s and an Elder from the 1970s for many years until 2001. He was 98. An old boy of S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia, his funeral was graced by the chaplains and prefects of the school, as a mark of respect for the oldest Thomian in the country. He is survived by his Finnish wife Kaarina and they both used to be regulars at Sunday service at St. Andrew's.

In an interview he gave the St. Andrew in June 2015, he described himself as an old fashioned run-of-the-mill God fearing gentleman. He worked in finance at Ceylon Trading Company for thirty years, enjoying some relaxing moments in Nuwara Eliya, or bird watching in jungles around Sri Lanka. Kaarina and he played a round of golf in Nuwara Eliya where they were members of the Nuwara Eliya Golf Club. He also enjoyed a pint or two of Carlsberg while listening to Mozart, his favourite composer. With a preference for European cuisine, his favourite was Lammas Paisti, the famed Finnish lamb stew. More recently, Kaarina and he were part of the Senior Citizens Group that met at St. Andrew's for a morning of fellowship.

Noel reminisced that in those days, Elders at St. Andrew's were chosen on duty for a month and had to remain at the Church door until the end of the first verse of the hymn. The Elder would organize collection, record the takings and take it to the bank. He was the only local Elder in the church with all the others being expatriates. He also remembered having to import a bed for Rev. Angus McKnight who came to St. Andrew's as Minister as he was 7 feet tall. The maintenance of the church and manse was arranged by local companies, with Hunter & Co maintaining the gardens and Brooke Bond supplying all the tea for the manse and the church.

He would have regular conversations with members of the congregation after Sunday service. And on one such occasion, an Elder remembers a 93 year old Noel stating that he had decided to stop driving in Colombo and it was time for them to begin living in a home as they were finding it difficult to manage now that age was setting in.

"A life of service is a life well and greatly lived."



The Story Behind the Christmas Hymn

Oh Holy Night



The story is strange and fascinating and began in France, going way back to 1847 and the Commissionaire of Wines, Placide Cappeau de Roquemaure. Placide was a poet but not much of a church-goer. So, when his priest asked him to pen a poem for Christmas, he was truly

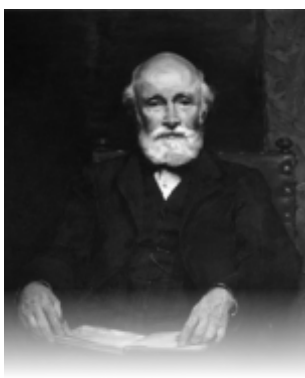


**Placide Cappeau
de Roquemaure**



Adolphe Charles Adam

Guided by the Gospel of Luke, he put himself in the birthplace of Jesus, right there in the stable in Jerusalem. His *Cantique de Noel* was completed not long after, but Placide also realised, that this was not just a poem. It needed a master musician. He turned to his friend, Adolphe Charles Adams who had studied in the Paris Conservatoire and was now writing works for orchestras and ballets around the world. But Adolphe admitted that the lyrics given by his friend Placide were far more challenging than any request he had got from Berlin, St. Petersburg or London. But he rose to the challenge and the song was performed just three weeks later on Christmas Eve and a staple in all of France.



John Sullivan Dwight

Unfortunately, Placide became part of the socialist movement and church leaders discovered that Adolphe was a Jew. The song was denounced by the church as being unfit for church services because of "its lack of music taste and total absence of the spirit of religion".

However, a decade later, John Sullivan Dwight, a reclusive American writer introduced it to America, seeing something that moved him beyond the story of Christ. In France, even though the song was banned, people simply sang *Cantique de Noel* at home.

Legend even has it that during fierce fighting in the Franco-Prussian war, a French soldier suddenly jumped out

of his muddy trench, stood with no weapon in his hand and lifted his eyes to the heavens singing *Cantique de Noel*. He was joined by a German infantryman who climbed out of his hiding place and sang Martin Luther's *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come* in reply. It is said that the next 24 hours heralded a ceasefire in honour of Christmas Day and maybe, the French church began singing *Cantique de Noel* once again.



O Holy Night

Christmas Hymn and Carol

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the Spirit felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, the night when Christ was born;
O night, O holy night, O night divine!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!*

*Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
O'er the world a star is sweetly gleaming,
Now come the wisemen from out of the Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus lowly manger;
In all our trials born to be our friends.
He knows our need, our weakness is no stranger,
Behold your King! Before him lowly bend!
Behold your King! Before him lowly bend!*

*Truly He taught us to love one another,
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains he shall break, for the slave is our brother.
And in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
With all our hearts we praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! Then ever, ever praise we,
His power and glory ever more proclaim!
His power and glory ever more proclaim!*

When did Christmas become Christmas?



The holiday was not a Christian holiday until four centuries after Christ's death and became official only after eight centuries. Prior to this, it was a holiday season that lasted almost two months and incorporated traditions from numerous countries, steeped in paganistic rituals.



Christmas includes holidays from Christianity and Judaism, pagan traditions from Africa and European winter solstice celebrations.

The forty days before Christmas, Advent, was called the 'Forty Days of St Martin' during the Middle Ages.

Epiphany (January 06th) was a more important feast than Christmas until later in the medieval period.

Puritans in England banned the holiday during Cromwell's dictatorship from 1647 to 1660.

Puritans in Boston outlawed it from 1659 to 1681.

Christmas is actually Christ's Mass.

The actual day is supposed to be Christ's birthday, laid out according to stories from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Early Christians didn't celebrate Christmas in December – before the fourth century, Christ's birth was celebrated anywhere from January to May.

When Christmas was first recognised, Christmas seems to have been intended to supplant the pagan Roman festival celebrating Sol Invictus, a collective god encompassing three sun-deities. The substitution worked well considering that Christ was believed to be 'The Light of the World'.

The twelve days of Christmas resonates of the pagan Roman Festival of Saturnalia – dedicated to Saturn in which everything was turned upside down where the masters served the slaves. A precursor to Saturnalia was the Babylonian Zagmuk Festival celebrating the sun god Marduk.

Over time, Christmas borrowed from other winter festivals – the yule log and mistletoe from Scandinavia, the Christmas tree from Germany, holly and ivy from the Celtic druids and Santa Claus from the Netherlands.

The Philippines is known to have the longest Christmas season with Christmas carols starting as early as September and ending usually around January 9th with the feast of the Black Nazarene. Official observance, however, is from December 16th until the first Sunday of the new year.

Tuck in at Christmas...

The world's food habits



If there's one habit that remains ubiquitous anytime anywhere during the Christmas holidays, it is a surfeit of goodies to sate your senses. Whether it's Christmas fare or high spirits, Christmas has always been a time for eating, drinking and being merry.



In Italy – Panettone

The main part of the sweet feast is this cake baked with candied fruit, chocolate, raisins, and nuts. Italy also celebrates The Feast of the Seven Fishes which includes seven different fish prepared in seven different ways – salted cod and calamari are two popular dishes.



In Sweden - Saffron Buns

Julbord, a three course meal, is served at Christmas. The first dish is usually fish, second, cold cuts along with sausages and the third, meatballs and a potato casserole called Janssons frestelse. For dessert, another treat awaits - Saffron Buns. Shaped into an S, it's sweet and often yellow in color and served by the oldest daughter.



Tuck in at Christmas...

The world's food habits



In Mexico - Bacalao

Bacalao, or salted cod is a staple dish in Mexico. The rehydrated and cooked fish is made with tomato, anchovies, onions, potato and olives. It's filling and it certainly warms you up!



In Bulgaria - Kolivo

Kolivo is boiled wheat with sugar and walnuts and often the first item to appear on tables come Christmas Eve. Sometimes it is served with honey, poppyseed, grains, rice, beans, or dried fruit.



In Greece - Melomakarona

These sweet orange-zest cookies soaked in honey and topped with walnuts tastes very much like baklava.



In Germany - Christmas Goose

Having a Christmas goose is a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages originally tied to St. Martin's Day. The Goose is often stuffed with apples, chestnuts, onions, and prunes, then spiced with mugwort and marjoram and served with red cabbage, dumplings, gravy and sauerkraut.

Fun fact: The oldest known recipe for this dish comes from a cookbook published in 1350



In Lithuania – Kūčios

The Christmas meal has nine dishes. No meat dairy or hot food is served and instead the meal includes fish, breads, and vegetables including herring served in a tomato, mushroom or onion based sauce, smoked eel, potatoes, sauerkraut and mushrooms, bread or cranberry pudding.



Tuck in at Christmas...

The world's food habits



In the Philippines - Roast Pig

Noche Buena, as Christmas dinner is known is held after families attend the Mass of the Rooster. Cured pork leg or spit-roasted pig are the main features, served with a ball of cheese, spring rolls and fruit salad.



In Costa Rica - Tamales

Every family has their own 'secret' recipe for tamales, which is a corn dough, wrapped in a banana leaf or corn husk and steamed with a stuffing of pork, and some with beef or chicken with garlic, onion, potatoes, or raisins for added flavour.



In Japan – Fried Chicken

Fun fact: 3.6 million Japanese families eat KFC on Christmas Eve and KFC's Christmas bucket has not only fried chicken but also Christmas cake.



In Israel - Latkes

Fried potato pancakes which recognises that the Second Temple kept the Menorah burning with oil for eight days. A Christmas meal also includes fried donut and fritters.



Meet our Congregation - Maureen Gennard



How would you describe yourself?

I have never thought about it. I suppose, I am what I do for others, not what I need to do for myself. Spending my time for others.

And your family?

My father came to Sri Lanka from India and worked with the British High Commission. My mother was a teacher in Maths and English. I was 9 and my brother 5, when my father died. My mother is now a Minister with the Four Square Gospel Church.

And how did you meet your husband?

I met my husband Glyn in 1997 and he proposed to me in 2000 but I told him that he had to reform before I married him. He should not smoke or consume alcohol and he must come to Church. Glyn told his story to a colleague, Rod Hobbs, who was an elder at St Andrew's and Rod brought Glyn to Church. Glyn attended St Andrew's regularly and we married at St Andrew's in 2004. Rod Hobbs was a witness for Glyn at the service conducted by Rev John Purves, Rev Dayantha from the 4 Square Church and Rev Dinesh Bulathsinhala. I attended services at St Andrew's only after my wedding as I attended the Four Square Church prior to that. Glyn returned to the UK in 2012 due to better employment prospects.

What's work like?

In 2004 I volunteered at the thrift shop and from 2006 I worked with the Helping Hands families, spending many days visiting

them and taking care of them. I was involved with the Tsunami Projects organised by St Andrew's in 2005. I like to be involved in Church activities and charity work. I spent many years visiting Mulleriyawa Ward 19 and motivating the Ladies in the ward.

How do you relax?

I like to listen to Christian melodies and the quiet of Nuwara Eliya. I love my dogs, animals and birds, listening to small children and elderly people telling their stories.

What are three things you can't do without ?

God, Money and Wisdom

Without God you do not have anything else, you cannot do what you need to do. I include, money so that I have money to give to the poor people. Wisdom because it is much more important than knowledge, wisdom will guide you, how to use the money.

What has been most challenging in your life?

There have always many challenges but perhaps, in my mind my education was a challenge because I always thought I could not do it but I did it.

What is your favourite food ?

Lamprais, biryani and KFC

What do you not like?

I am very troubled if I see children who are hungry.



When God Protects.... be inspired by Indrias!



Indrias Javaid and his family, hailing from Pakistan, came to worship at St Andrew's about four years ago. He worked as the administrator for a hospital run by South Korean missionaries in Karachi, when he was kidnapped whilst driving the hospital van. The kidnappers had expected some South Korean missionaries to be in the van in order to extract a ransom. However, only Indrias and his co-worker were in the van and so they were taken.

They were held for over a month in horrendous conditions and moved from place to place. The normal behaviour of these kidnappers was to either receive a ransom within three days or kill those they had kidnapped.

After 40 days expecting to be killed, Indrias and his friend were loaded into a large transport lorry with their hands bound. Indrias prayed hard. A plan to escape came into his mind. He was to look for a particular place with trees and a bridge and then jump. Miraculously, he was able to wriggle free from his trusses and jump. His companion did not jump and was never seen again. Indrias broke his ankle but was able to limp to a police station.

Indrias told his story to the police, but they would not believe him and jailed him. Finally, he was released to his family but he continued to be harassed by the group that kidnapped him. Leaving Pakistan was his best option.

The family travelled to Sri Lanka, then to Malaysia and back again to Sri Lanka and were met by Rev Dr Roderick Campbell at St Andrew's. The family worshipped regularly but one day, it was noticed they were no longer coming to church. When Roderick enquired, he learned that Indrias had been arrested and detained at the Detention Centre. When Roderick visited him, he found a fearful Indrias, afraid of being sent back to Pakistan and in danger of his life.

Rev Roderick visited him regularly, took books and prayed with him and reported his situation to the UNHCR during regular meetings. Nothing happened, there was a sort of stone walling when asked about, "giving him Refugee Status". He was not on their visiting list, in spite of the fact that Rev. Gary Van Brocklin, a member of St Andrew's congregation had visited Pakistan and verified Indrias' story.

While in detention, Indrias contracted dengue and was sent to the hospital. After returning to the detention camp he was listed to be repatriated to Pakistan and when he showed the hospital records of his dengue, he was removed from the line and sent back to the detention camp.

One Friday afternoon, just before Roderick was due to go to the Presbytery of Europe, he visited Indrias and found him distraught. He was due to be sent back to Pakistan that weekend. Roderick was at a loss as to know what to do. Unbeknown to him however, a young lady worker from UNHCR took it upon herself to visit Indrias and was shocked by what she found. She reported her findings to the UNHCR office, which was hosting a visit by the UNHCR HQ staff from Geneva. She explained Indrias' situation to them and they immediately raised his status to that of Refugee, which meant he could not be deported.

Indrias was released, reunited with his family and promised an opportunity to settle in another country. Rev Roderick organised for donations from Scotland to help the family and these funds were used to help Indrias and his family begin a new life in Los Angeles.

The family have now settled north of Los Angeles and will spend three months of orientation and English lessons before starting to rebuild their lives. They attend a Central Presbyterian Church in California and have been welcomed to the area by the congregation. The children Raima, Anaya and Aasa have started school. Marlene and Rev Gary Van Brocklin have visited them in their new town.



Saul, Indrias' brother and his family were also part of St Andrew's congregation as they had become caught-up a similar situation while providing shelter to Indrias and his family. Saul's wife Huma and daughters Fanny, Shaleeza, Ria and Samantha and grandson Yushua have been given a new home in Las Vegas. They are also settling in well.

Our Scottish Bond – Au revoir Revd. Tom and Hello Revd. Scott



Netherlee Church in Glasgow have had a strong bond with Scots Kirk in Colombo since the 1950s. This partnership was started between the Rev Andrew Baillie who was the Minister at St Andrews and Rev Stanley Mair who was Minister at Netherlee Church. They were friends from the time of the WWII. Our partnership with Netherlee Church continues just as strong today, a relationship of mutual help and friendship.

Rev Tom Nelson who has been Minister at Netherlee Church for the past 16 years has just retired. He has been a huge support to Scots Kirk in many ways, both with pastoral care through our troubles and the voice of St Andrew's Scots Kirk in Scotland, articulating the needs of our Church in Colombo and the Mission work we undertake.



of the talented choristers. Tom's final day in the pulpit was Sunday 29 July which as you might expect was quite an emotional day. At the end of the service Tom was presented a photographic memento, a book titled "This is your Life" book detailing the last 30 years of their lives in the Ministry and for a bit of fun, a remote controlled toy tractor – one of his great loves. Even the church's fire alarm was set off after the end of the service much to everyone's surprise.

Rev Tom and his wife Catherine came twice to Sri Lanka to visit our Mission Projects and also hosted Kumar, our Church officer and Modini, our house mother at Netherlee Cottage to Glasgow to learn about church administration and mental health in Scotland.

Tom's retirement was marked by a Community Social evening including a memorable performance by the local Netherlee Primary School choir and Netherlee Church Choir - with a specially written rendition of "I did it my way" composed by one



Our Scottish Bond – Au revoir Revd. Tom and Hello Revd. Scott



A barbecue was held in the Scout Hall after church on what was a damp Sunday afternoon - but a bit of rain never stopped the Netherlee congregation and community from enjoying themselves. Tom and Catherine cut a celebratory cake with Tom saying a few words of thanks which brought his era in Netherlee to a fitting end.

The new Minister at Netherlee Church is Revd. Scott Blythe. The Glasgow Presbytery decided that when Tom retired the congregations of Netherlee and adjacent Stamperland should be linked and unite within three years.

Scott is Scottish by birth and is married to Liz an American and a minister of the Presbyterian Church USA. They have two children Duncan aged 5 and Eilidh aged 3. Scott took a BSc and BD at the University of Glasgow. He was University Chaplain and then a Police Officer/Detective with Essex Police and the London Metropolitan area. Scott moved to be Minister of Tron Kirk in Edinburgh and then to the USA as interim Minister of Perry Hall Presbyterian Church and finally co-pastor with his wife at the Presbyterian Church, Morris Plains, New Jersey before returning to Glasgow.

We do hope Rev Scott and his family will find time to visit St Andrew's Scots Kirk, Colombo sometime in the near future, but in the meanwhile Netherlee Church will continue to develop its long term association with St Andrew's.



Netherlee News



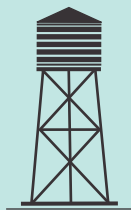
Round up of events at the Cottage

The Youth Group's visit to Netherlee on 8th Sept was a great success and we look forward to them coming again. We played games, the youth group painted the nails of the Ladies and we had lunch. A great time had by all.

We caught our first polecat at the Cottage and released it many miles away in the wilds. We are now trying to catch the rest of the family. The cage and trap were designed by Buddhika and for our first attempt to catch the Polecat we placed bananas in the cage. The idea was that polecat would access the cage to reach the bananas and the door would spring closed.

However, what we didn't factor in were the resident monkeys. The monkeys were seen sitting on top of the cage, reaching in through the door and helping themselves to the bananas, we had to resort to a whole pineapple fixed carefully to the bottom of the cage. This did the trick.

We need to access the roof space to check how these polecats get into that space and avoid a repeat of these problems. We also have a visiting iguana who likes the roof space too. These are all challenges we are trying to manage ably led by Buddhika.



A British Song Recital organised by the Association of British Residents donated Rs 50,000 towards replacing the water tank and placing it on a frame to increase the water pressure in the house.

We have also received a donation from Netherlee Church of £50 which we are going to put towards a new bed at the Cottage.



◀ The team and the ladies are very busy making bags, rugs and crochet items towards their contributions for the Annual Church Bazaar. The ladies enjoy making rugs so much that when Lisa, a volunteer at Netherlee Cottage eleven years ago came to visit, they presented her with a pretty and useful rug.

▶ It gives us great pleasure to record the progress of one of our long-term resident, Chandra. Despite her hearing difficulties and not being able to speak, she is now working as a cleaner for one of the neighbours in close proximity to the Cottage. Chandra goes twice a week to clean the house. She has opened her own bank account and is now familiar with cash machines and is feeling more independent to do her own shopping.





The Youth Group brings dance, games and red nails to Netherlee

Manicures and dance sessions - what an amazing way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

On September 08th, the Youth Group squeezed into a car and headed down to Thalahoma with the help of Google maps to visit the ladies of Netherlee. There were six of us; Kimaya, Sarah, Kyara, Avanthi, Nadhini and Buwanika and joining us were the Committee Members of Netherlee Cottage.

We arrived at the home at 10.30 am and were greeted with warm smiles and hugs from the ladies. They were very excited happy to see us all. We started off with pass the parcel (which was a box of chocolates) with entertaining and funny forfeits which made us all laugh. Next, we played dancing statues which they loved, especially Ganga. They all seemed to enjoy

music, to sing and dance, even Chandra though she has hearing difficulties. The game ended with a baila dance session and the youth teaching them the Macarena dance routine.

Once the energy levels dropped after a lot of dancing, we all sat and listened to the ladies sing songs. They were not shy and loved their solo time. We then set up a manicure station and each lady was paired up with a youth member to paint their nails. They were asked to choose their favorite colour; red being the most chosen. They absolutely loved this. We ended the day with lunch and ice cream. They bid us goodbye with kisses and bigger smiles. We all squeezed back into the car hoping to return soon.

Buwanika Weerasinha



Memories of a former Session Clerk



In 1980, I was Master with the Anchor Line Ltd. and the owner of the company had met Lalith Athulathmudali at University in England and had always kept in touch. Lalith had mentioned 'the Open Economy' under President Jayawardena and a specific interest in developing seafaring opportunities for Sri Lankan Seafarers. I was handed a 13,000 ton general cargo vessel which I registered in Colombo and renamed her 'Sigiriya'. I set up an office in Colombo and spent the first six months in what was then 'The Oberoi' right next door to St. Andrew's.

Interestingly my father had been at University in Scotland with Andrew Baillie in the 1930s. I called in to see them and it proved to be a very happy and helpful friendship - both Andrew and Martha pointed us in the right direction including advising us on our first house and introducing us to Elephant House, Victoria Stores and the various markets.

Soon afterwards I was appointed an Elder and subsequently Session Clerk. This continued with Angus McKnight, after Andrew retired.

My wife Sandra and I have happy memories of our ten years in Colombo plus a further six years when we visited every three months. We remember Peter the cook and Ganesan, (who

seemed to get everything wrong), the organist at the time Rosemary and Mr Jinasena who ran the Scout Troupe.

There are also a number of stories about Andrew. When he retired he was invited to meet President Jayawardene for a farewell tete-a-tete, who then surprised him by quoting poet Robert Burns in a broad Scottish accent!

Another was the Annual Remembrance Service when Andrew invited all the relevant Ambassadors and High Commissioners located in Sri Lanka. He surprised us by also inviting both the West German and East German Ambassadors (separate countries at that time). When questioned about this, he replied, "They were in the war as well!" To our surprise, they attended the service.

Both Andrew and Martha were highly memorable individuals in Sri Lanka and in many ways their departure was the end of an era. We were proud to have known them both - they always made us most welcome and we valued their advice and knowledge.

Bob Logan



The St. Andrew gains some kudos



From Sue Cambell

Many thanks again Gillian and congrats again to you, Savi, Rohan and anyone else involved in putting together a very comprehensive, interesting and appealing publication.

We returned from France at the weekend, so this was my first opportunity to read it and I've enjoyed doing so. Hope you are both well.

Kind regards
Sue

From Jim Sharp

Dear Gillian,

To you and the other team members who all help to produce the Newsletter - well done, good and faithful servants!

This latest edition is rich and full, and is a great resource for St Andrew's Scots Kirk, both in Colombo and its wider network around the world.

Blessings to you all!
Jim

From Stewart Lamont

Have now read the Newsletter and much enjoyed – especially as I am having “Here I am Lord” as a hymn tomorrow. I actually prefer what was rejected as the next line “Here I stand, Lord” (which is a direct quote from Luther perhaps why his Jesuit friends rejected it!!)


Cheers
Stewart
Best regards to all at St A

From Rev. Roderick D M Campbell

Thank you Gillian, I enjoyed that.

Roderick





Dates for your Diary

Saturday	Dec . 1 st	8.00 pm	Silent Night Concert featuring Soul Sounds
Sunday	Dec . 2 nd	9.30 am	Sunday Service – Communion
Friday	Dec . 7 th	7.30 pm	Christmas Carol Service
Sunday	Dec . 9 th	9.30 am	Nativity Play and Sunday Service
Sunday	Dec . 16 th	9.30 am	Sunday Service
Sunday	Dec . 23 rd	9.30 am	Sunday Service
Monday	Dec . 24 th	11.15 pm	Watchnight Service – Christmas Eve
Tuesday	Dec . 25 th	9.30 am	Christmas Service Sunday
Sunday	Dec . 30 th	9.30 am	Sunday Service

Services at St Andrew's Scots Kirk are held every Sunday at 9.30 am.
Communion services are every first Sunday.

The Lunch Project feeds lunch to the needy every Thursday from
2.30 pm to 1.30 pm at the Manse.

Volunteer servers are urgently required.

The Thrift shop is open every Tuesday from 11am to 1pm at the
Church Hall.



 SAINT
ANDREW'S
SCOTSKIRK
COLOMBO SRI LANKA

MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

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