

Minister

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Church Secretary

Mrs Karen Keil,

Church Office Hours

9.15am- 2.15pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9.15am-12.15pm Friday

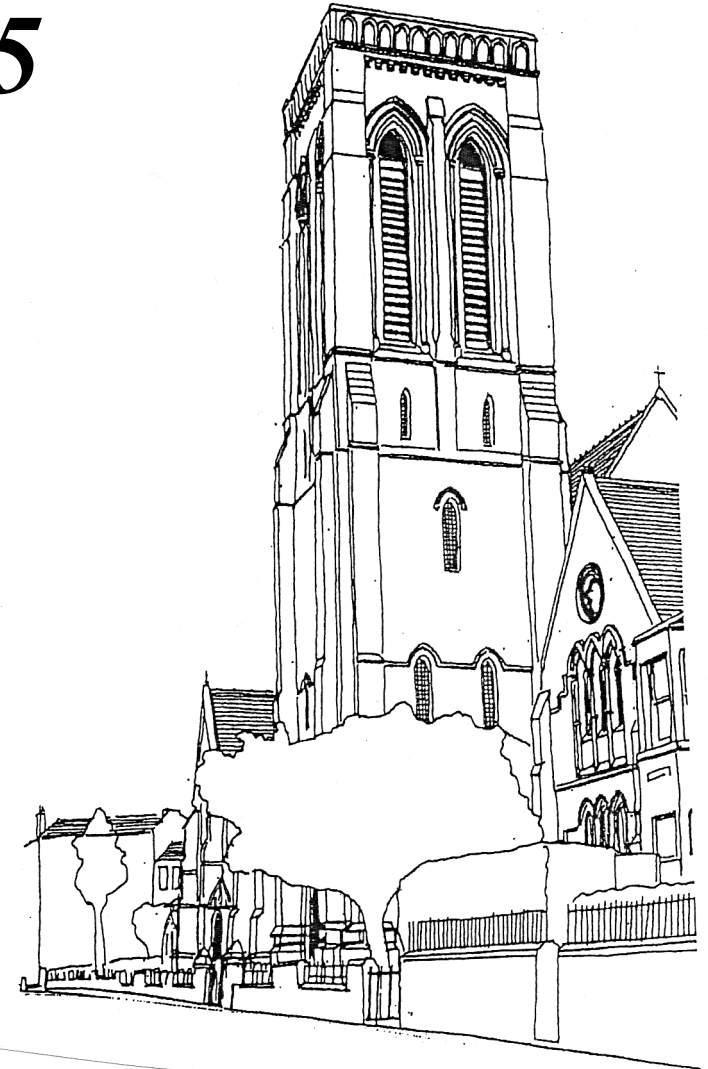
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ST MICHAEL'S is 125



December 2008

Recommended Donation 30p

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THE WEEKLY CHURCH DIARY

What's On in St Michael's

Sunday **10 am** **Choir Practice**
 11 am **Morning Service**
 and Blast Off!

Tea is served in the hall after Morning Worship
The Lord's Supper is celebrated every quarter
and after the service on the last Sunday of the month

6 pm **St Michael's at Six Concerts**

Monday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**
 2 pm **Friendship Club**
 7 pm **Yummies**

Tuesday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**

Wednesday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**
 5 pm **Rainbows**
 6.15 pm **Brownies**

Thursday **10.00 am** **Archives Group**
 1.45 pm **I.O.M. Society**

Saturday **10.30 am** **Coffee Morning**
 10.30 am **The Young Ones**

For further details of all these groups please contact the church office on 0131 478 9675

ST. MICHAEL'S

at SIX

*Sunday Recitals
from 6 to 7 pm at
St. Michael's
Parish Church, 1
Slateford Road,
Edinburgh.*

DOUNE WIND

**KATHARINE WAKE (flute) CHARLES DODDS (oboe)
VAUGHAN TOWNHILL (clarinet) MARIAN
KIRTON (horn), RAINER THONNES (bassoon)
with guest pianist Stuart Montgomery**

*H. Berlioz: Serenade to the Madonna (arr. for wind quintet by R.
Taylor)*

*W.A. Mozart: Quintet in E flat Major (K452)
for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn
Largo-Allegro Moderato Larghetto Allegretto*

K. Hoover: Winter Spirits for solo flute.

*C. Debussy: Suite no. 1. 3 pieces arranged for wind quintet by N.
Hallam*

1. Minstrels 2. La fille aux cheveux de lin 3. Golliwogg's Cake-Walk

Five Carols arranged for Doune Wind by Geoffrey Emerson.

- 1. Angelus ad virginem. 2. Wexford Carol. 3. Come all ye worthy
Christian men.*
 - 4. Personent Hodie. 5. We wish you a Merry Christmas*
-

SUNDAY 14th DECEMBER: 6PM
admission £7.00 (under 15's free)

Dear friends,

"Comfort, yes, comfort my people!" says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low. The crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 40:1-5)

During the season of Advent and Christmas Christians explore the different ways that God comes to us in the world where we are. The story of Advent is about how we anticipate God's presence with us and the story of Christmas is about God breaking in to the world as a sign of his saving power. His presence helps us to come together in worship to make the paths of our lives straight and the rough places smooth. He helps us to lift up the lowly and the humbled while bringing low the arrogantly powerful and the violent oppressor.

Throughout December at St. Michael's and the churches in our Parish Grouping there are many opportunities to experience the presence of God with us: the incarnate God, enabling and encouraging us to make the world

a place of justice, joy, peace and worship. Together these are signs of love and hope at a time when many people might feel that this Christmas the future doesn't appear as secure or comfortable as it has in the past. Climate change, credit crunch, recession, rising prices all fill us with worry or need. So, where we can let us encourage and support one another offering each other a gift of hope and joy this year. Here are some opportunities to do that amongst the local congregations.

- We mark God's incarnation as a sign of justice at our Amnesty International sign-in Sunday on the Sunday 7th December and we follow that up at the Film Club on Monday 15th when we will be watching Rendition at 7:00 p.m. Don't forget also the Gift Service on Sunday 14th December when we bring gifts for those children most in need at Christmas.
- We mark God's incarnation as a sign of joy at the Santa Drive on Monday 8th December at 7:30p.m. when we will all be having fun making up our Santas, and then at our Christmas Party on the 29th December.
- We mark God's incarnation as a sign of peace amidst the rush of Christmas on Sunday 14th December at St. Martin's where there will be a Labyrinth – an opportunity for quiet meditation. Pop in anytime between 3:00p.m. and 6:00p.m. and take a moment to relax and reflect.
- We mark God's incarnation as a sign of worship during our Sunday services but also in the evening at an Advent service at St. Colm's on Sunday 7th December at 7:30p.m. and at St. Martin's Carol service on Sunday 21st December at 3:00p.m.

I hope you enjoy a happy Christmas,

James

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

Baptism

Laurie Elizabeth Meaney Thompson, daughter of Kirsty and Damian Thompson was baptised on the 23rd November.

St Columba's Hospice

With Christmas approaching, can I remind you of our collection of used postage stamps for the Hospice. The box is in the outer vestibule and you can leave old spectacles there at the same time. Many thanks and have a happy Christmas.

Grace Taylor



DOUNE WIND

An ensemble of wind instruments, usually a quintet, varying in numbers of players according to the requirements of the repertoire and the occasion.

In an early season of *Summer Music in Balquidder* Doune Wind appeared as an octet playing music by Mozart. Its members are principal players with various non-professional orchestras and groups in Edinburgh who enjoy very much performing chamber music. They have played together for some twenty years.

As well as giving performances for music clubs and local festivals the ensemble plays for charity events and has performed at The Royal Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh, Balquidder Arts, Gosforth House, Bowhill, Paxton House, Mellerstain and The Scottish Arts Club.

Doune Wind have performed a wide variety of masterpieces including Nielson's Wind Quintet, Janacek's Mladi, Mozart Serenades as well as much attractive light music. Our clarinettist, Vaughan Townhill is also an arranger and, especially for the first performance at Balquidder, has compiled a suite of Scottish melodies for wind quintet.

It will be a special pleasure to welcome Stuart Montgomery into this programme to perform the Mozart piano quintet with Doune Wind.

ST MICHAEL'S FILM CLUB



MONDAY 15TH DECEMBER, 7:00

p.m.

'Rendition'

Cert: 15

Gavin Hood's thriller shows the harsh reality of the US government's practice of "extraordinary rendition" which snatches terrorist suspects and takes them to be tortured in compliant countries while claiming "we do not torture".

Come along to watch and discuss the issues in the story.

7pm in the Church Hall. Entrance free

(Donation to cover cost of refreshments)

Notes from November Session

- Judith Merten has decided to give up as co-ordinator of the Furlough House and it is likely that the care of 27 Shandon Crescent will revert back to 121 George Street.
- Communication has been received from the Boys Brigade advising the Session that it had been concluded that as there were no boys and no leaders the company, with the Kirk Session's agreement, should be placed in abeyance.
- A service will be held in the new year for the Boys Brigade.
- Marie Mitchell and Douglas Bannatyne offered to attend St Martin's 125th Anniversary on behalf of St Michael's. The service on 9th November would be followed by lunch and a ceilidh.
- The Moderator advised the Session that we would be having our Nativity on Sunday 21st December 2008 and it would follow the same format as last year with volunteers taking part.
- The Session agreed that the offerings taken at both the Christmas Eve services and Christmas Day service would be given to Bethany Christian Trust. It was

suggested that we should make more use of the Gift Aid envelopes at these services.

- The Gift Service will be on Sunday 14th December 2008 with Amnesty International signing on Sunday 7th December 2008
- The next Superintendence visit from Presbytery starting in 2009 would be from Leith North, while we will visit Corstorphine St Ninian's.

125th Anniversary of St Martin of Tours Episcopal Church

On Sunday 9th November St Martin's celebrated the 125th Anniversary of the founding of their congregation in the Gorgie/Dalry area. The Service was led by the Bishop of Edinburgh, the Rt Revd Brian Smith and included 4 baptisms. A wonderful bring and share lunch was served downstairs in the hall and was followed by a Ceilidh, back in the Church.

During the 125 years in the area the congregation have occupied 3 different premises – a tin church, the building at the foot of Ardmillan Terrace until the early 1980s and their current building at the junction of Dalry Road with Murieston Crescent. To commemorate the 125th anniversary a banner made up of hand and footprints of all the congregation, fashioned into a cross has been created and hangs behind the altar.

The celebration was on the Sunday nearest Martinmas – 11th November and the Bishop spoke on the life of St Martin who was a soldier, he ripped his cloak in half for a beggar and this is where the word Chapel originates. St Martin is patron saint of Winegrowers.

The National Society for the Visually Handicapped Al-Shurooq School for Blind Children

Autumn 2008 Newsletter

Dear Friends

September is always the beginning of the new school year and one more step along the world we go. The children and their parents were rather disappointed that the move into the new school did not take place. Nevertheless, we are still hopeful that this will happen towards the end of October.

We were supposed to start the term with 25 children, but so far, we have only 23. Two of our children are still missing, and we are even unable to trace them. One of them is Abdullah; he was abandoned by his father, and has been so far in the care of an unreliable mother. She took him home towards the middle of July and we have not heard from her since. All efforts to reach her went in vain. We just pray and hope that the child is safe and unharmed.

Razan is the other child who is still absent, whom we are also unable to reach, she may be ill or it may be that the family wanted her to spend the Holy month of Ramadan with the family.

It's the final countdown! Saturday, 29th November 2008 is the date set for the official inauguration of our new building. We are hoping the contractor will hand over the building by the end of October, which gives us enough time to move in and get things up and running. At the moment, work is being done on landscaping. We will have a nice garden and a beautiful playground for the children.

Helena Shehadeh

TOWER

Items for the next (February) issue of the magazine should be with the editor by Sunday 18th January.

Congratulations to Callum and Miriam Taylor who won the competition to design the cover for the Christmas Orders of Service.

Outreach

GUILD WEEK

Today is the last Sunday day of Guild Week – a special week where guild members are encouraged to promote the C of S Guild in their own areas. This year, Guild members are passing on, across the country, prayers of peace. The Outreach Group are encouraging everyone in St Michael's to join in this Chain

of Peace by writing down YOUR prayer of peace and pinning onto the noticeboard at the back of the church – we can join in with people all over the country who will be praying for peace at this time.

BETHANY

As you may know, last year St Michael's provided a care shelter and a meal for those helped by BCT each winter evening. This year we will again be helping to provide this service in January and March. Many helped by providing food for those using the shelter, and this year the Outreach Group, who are coordinating this, would ask you to add YOUR name to the list at the back of the church if you would like to help this year. We are also asking you to add your name to the list **IF** you would like to be added to the list of those who might help on the actual evening of the care shelter. This information will be helpful when we plan the catering for that evening!

Fiona Punton

NEW EVENTS GROUP

List for your diary of Events to come this year

Showcase Christmas Concert - Friday 5th December

Santa Night – Monday 8th December

Christmas 125th Anniversary Celebration Party – Monday 29th December

Tickets are available from members of the Events Group

Anniversary Reflection

From the viewpoint that is the *Tower* much has changed in the period of my editorship (does that sound too posh?) of the church magazine. One of the interesting facts in the Anniversary Book is that somehow I have been the editor since 1966, slightly more than a third of the lifetime of the church.

A St Michael's magazine had begun in 1887, printed professionally. In the 1960s it was decided to print the magazine "in-house" using Roneo stencils and duplicating machine. When Stanley Clark, an elder acting for the Session, asked me to edit for a month or two I was quite keen; I had notions of becoming a journalist once I'd graduated. Those plans didn't last long but the monthly magazine stayed with me and I with it.

The Session Room, in the tower of the church, became, once a month, a version of a smoky newsroom. Two typists, Betty and Margo, who could type faster than I could think, were poised to type (and cut) the stencils. The format was as now (but foolscap rather than A4) with odd number pages on the left and even numbers on the right (this magazine has, for example, pages 1 and 18 on the same sheet). The layout and content had to be fixed before we started although some items had to be made up on the spot (or taken from a handy file of "fillers") to fill a space. It was a fairly frantic evening although the magazine was usually 'put to bed' in a few hours. Later in the week, Janet Kerr, and after her Alasdair Webster, would attach the stencil skin to a drum through which ink transferred the copy to the paper. The quality of print depended on the sharpness of the typewriter keys, the quality of paper and the temperature of the ink; there were times when the temperature was so low in the Session Room that the ink froze.

Moirra Miller later became the quick on the draw typist for many years, enduring the cold of the Tower, (in my memory it was always cold., even in summer) patiently waiting for me to finish editing a piece that had come in late. We were grateful to the Country Dancers who brought us tea and biscuits.

Now I'm typing this at the kitchen table, much more slowly than Margo, Betty, Moira or other typists ever did. But I'm warm, there's a cup of coffee and music if I want it. New technology allows me to receive material by email, edit on the computer, add in graphics, play with the layout and instead of taking three hours as it used to, it can now take ...days!

However I still enjoy putting it together and I know that some members of the St Michael's family welcome the magazine as it keeps them in touch with the life of our church.. Thanks to all contributors and distributors for your work for the *Tower*.

DJW

SAD NEWS FOR THE QUIZ ENTHUSIASTS

The December Quiz will be the last one issued by me. I have run out of

quizzes and also out of steam. It might be a good time for another person to take it on. It has been a lot of fun and people really looked forward each month to receiving it and testing their wits.

The financial aspect is secondary but it did raise £600 this year, all gift-aided.

The September Quiz was won by Bette Wallace, a previous winner. This must have been more difficult than usual since the top score was 23/30. Well done Bette.

October's Quiz was won by Thomas Shaw of Loanhead, a new name. His score was 28/29. (one question was withdrawn due to an error in the wording. Apologies and well done to Thomas.

Hope you are lucky with the November Quiz.

A great big thank-you to all my regulars within the church, the bowling club, the Craft Shop and Scottish Widows office

Irene Herd

AHOY ALL WOOL WORKERS

Firstly I must apologise for the lack of news last month. My computer had crashed and I was too late with the information.

I was able to visit the Neo Natal Clinic on the 7th November to deliver 14 blankets, 14 cardigans and 7 hats. A big, big, thank-you.

ARCHIVES GROUP

By the time you receive this Tower your household should have received a copy of the 125th Anniversary book. We hope that you enjoy it.

If you want any extra copies as gifts they are on sale at the cost of £5. Please see a member of the Archives Group.

Irene Herd

SEND A MESSAGE OF HOPE

'These cards came from people from all over, people I have not seen and who have not seen me. They wrote the cards, they went out and bought stamps...it was because of these people that I became a braver person...It made a big difference in prison. The guards saw that if anything happened to me, the world would know.'

Mahjoub Sharif, Sudan's 'people's poet', jailed many times and for long periods under Sudan's military dictators. In 1990, an urgent Amnesty solidarity campaign for him resulted in thousands of messages for him. In 2008, he and his wife Amira visited the UK to say 'thank you' - bringing with them their treasured collection of cards.

'It was beyond happiness to see the cards. They made us feel supported, for all the prisoners and their families. And for me and my daughters, they gave us so much hope...'

Amira Shari

A simple greetings card can make a real difference. These expressions of solidarity can have a great impact – not only on the individuals we write to but for families, fellow-prisoners and more widely in communities in their struggle for human rights.

Each December we in St Michael's take part in Amnesty International's Greetings Card Campaign which brings people across the world in touch with each other. Each year we send hundreds of cards with messages of goodwill and solidarity to people whose rights have been abused, and to those in danger for defending human rights.

People featured include prisoners of conscience, people on death row, human rights defenders, or others at risk. The messages show them that people around the world are standing with them. They can also bring about change: the impression this mail makes on police, prison staff or political authorities can help to keep the recipients safe.



Sunday December 7 is the Sign-in Day. Here though is an example from the list of 30 provided by A.I.

R.V.S. Vaughan Williams; Fantasia on 'Greensleeves'
Roever & Korb; Highland Cathedral

**Stuart Montgomery would like to wish everyone a very happy
Christmas**

**Music at St. Michael's for Sunday Services
played by Stuart Montgomery *Organ & Piano*
DECEMBER 2008**

Sunday 7th December

We welcome Lewis Forbes at the organ

Sunday 14th December

P. Fletcher; Festival Toccata
J.S. Bach: Sheep may safely graze
M. Head; The Little Road to Bethlehem
H. Purcell; Trumpet Tune and Air

Sunday 21st December

S. Montgomery: Yuletide Fanfare
J.S. Bach: Bist du bei mir.
A L. Webber: Pie Jesu
John Rutter: Toccata In Seven

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

R. Prizeman; Songs or Praise
A.L. Webber: Pie Jesu
R. Wells; Roasting Chestnuts
A. Adam; O Holy Night
C.M. Widor; Toccata (from the 5th Symphony)

H. Blake; Walking in the Air (from the film The Snowman)
G. Faure; Pie Jesu
The Rocking Carol
G. Oldroyd: This Endris Night

Sunday 28st December

A Scottish Medley (arr SM)

125th Anniversary Service 30th November 2008

We celebrated our 125th anniversary in characteristic style: a service followed by lunch in the hall. The service celebrated the past, the present and the optimistic future of St Michaels's, along with the first Sunday in Advent and St Andrew's Day! Music, reflections and readings fitted together perfectly.

Inside on a cold but bright day the church was warm in every way. Friends from St Martin's, St Colm's and from Gorgie/Dalry churches were welcomed as were former members whom we were delighted to see. The Archives Group had arranged displays in the window alcoves of the church, providing a very visual history: photographs of the six ministers who have led us, the communion silver, the 'treasury' of the church, bibles and memorabilia of the life of our church.

The first reading echoed that of 1883 when the Rev James Macgregor conducted the service and introduced the Rev. George Wilson to his work in the district. The text was Galatians 4:3-5. James reminded us that the Presbytery had deliberately placed the church between the wealthy of Merchiston and the poor of the developing Gorgie / Dalry so that they could work together.

The readings included poetry by Scottish poets Ian Crichton Smith, George Mackay Brown and Edwin Muir, reflecting not only St Andrew's Day but also the journey which is Advent and the journey of St Michael's.

Stuart's music was aptly chosen, his own arrangement of Burns' and other Scots songs. and the choir's anthem, a version of 'All things bright and beautiful' with music by John Rutter, all a joy to hear.

Margaret Forrester was unable to be with us, having previously agreed to attend an anniversary service for Peter Donald in Inverness. She had sent a congratulatory card quoting Dr Wilson's favourite text: 'Thus far hath the Lord helped us.'

The Thanksgiving Prayer, summed up the themes : the past, present and future for St Michael's; our work with neighbouring congregations; and St Andrew's Day. Our response was: 'God of yesterday, today and tomorrow we give you thanks.'

The buffet lunch was a savoury and sweet delight. Many thanks must go to Heather Fallon and her team for the organisation. It was a fine feed on a fine day. Thanks to everyone who helped make this such a memorable occasion. **PABLO PACHECO AVILA** is a journalist in Cuba. He was arrested in 2003 and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment during a severe crackdown on the dissident movement in Cuba. It is believed his arrest was politically motivated and related to his legitimate journalistic activities and peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and association. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience and is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

Pablo Pacheco Avila works for an unofficial agency, Avilena Cooperative of Journalists. He has been subjected to harassment in the past. For example, in November 2002 he was reportedly detained for six hours after attempting to video police officers ill-treating two women.

Pablo Pacheco Avila is not due for release until 2023. His wife thanked Amnesty International for working for her husband's release, and said that this continued campaigning was very important to both of them.

You can send a religious or non-religious card to:
Pablo Pacheco Avila
Prision Municipal de Moron
Ciego de Avila
Cuba

Salutation: Dear Pablo

Suggested message:

You have not been forgotten by your friends in Scotland.

A postcard to Pablo requires a 56p stamp. A 10g card is 56p and a 20 g card is 81p

Please do not mention Amnesty in your message or use an Amnesty card.

UPDATE

You will probably remember the name of one prisoner to whom we sent cards last year. The Rev Bienvenido Samba Momesori had been detained in October 2003 in Equatorial Guinea and held without charge or trial until June 2008. He writes:

'I want to thank you and congratulate you for the work you do and for getting me free. I knew of your work because two years ago I received a letter in prison, from a woman in Spain...I also received the letters sent to me via the lawyer Fabian... Thank you for your solidarity.'

Christmas Bells

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play.
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of 'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song,
Of 'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day –
A voice, a chime
A chant sublime,
Of 'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I said,
 'For hate is strong
 And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men!'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
 The wrong shall fail
 The right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men!'

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 –1882)

Services and events during Advent and
Christmas...at St. Michael's, St. Colm's and St.
Martin's



Sunday 7th December 7:30p.m. Advent Service
at St. Colm's - worship and meditation.

Monday 8th December 7:30p.m. Santa Drive
at St. Michael's – fun for the family.

Sunday 14th December 3:00p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Labyrinth
at St. Martin's quiet meditation.

Sunday 21st December 3:00p.m. Christmas Carols
at St. Martin's – 'open mike' readings.

Christmas Eve
6:30p.m Family Service at St. Michael's.
7:30p.m. Christmas Eve at St. Colm's
11:15p.m. Midnight Mass at St. Martin's
11:30 p.m. Watchnight Service at St. Michael's

Christmas Day
10:15a.m. Celebrating Communion for Christmas at St. Martin's
11:00a.m. Christmas Communion at St. Michael's

Monday 29th December 7:00 p.m. St. Michael's Christmas Party

