

THE REVIEW

DECEMBER 2017



**WADDINGTON STREET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
DURHAM CITY DH1 4BG**

Church Website: www.durhamurc.org.uk

2.



A great night with food, bat biscuits, fireworks and pumpkins at the Student Night, with elements of St. Andrew's night, Halloween and Guy Fawkes. (Photographs by Kath Ogilvie.) (Pumpkins knitted by Yvonne.)



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS



Church Secretary.

It was with some real disappointment that the Elders heard at their November meeting that our Church Secretary Donald Mackay wishes to resign from that role. For many years Donald has served the congregation and the Elders' Meeting with a reliability and dedication that will be hard to follow. He did much unseen work in keeping things running smoothly. In addition, Donald forged some good contacts with those from the community who hire our premises and is well known in local church circles as the person to turn to about Waddington Street! Thankfully Donald is staying as a serving Elder and so his invaluable knowledge and experience will continue. It is however right to acknowledge and thank Donald most sincerely for his service to this congregation as Church Secretary. The search for a new Church Secretary has begun.

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*Thank
you*

Thanks to Jean Graham again for the beautiful and thoughtful floral arrangement for the St. Andrew's Service on 19th November. Members of the Caledonian Society attended and their President, Les Thomson read a lesson, as did former President Yvonne Melville.

Anyone wishing to join the Society, which is open to those with an interest in things Scottish, should speak to Les Thomson who will give details of the programme of events.



Our thanks also go to Reverend John Christie for leading us in a stimulating service of worship. John took time to socialise at coffee in the hall after the service and this was much appreciated by those who had the opportunity to speak with him.

John professed himself very impressed with the Lumière displays in Durham City.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS

Ministerial Services – Anyone requiring the services of a Minister should contact their own Elder who will make enquiries on their behalf.

WEEKLY NOTICE SHEETS - Please forward details of items and events for the weekly notice sheets to - Peter Galloway - telephone **0191 386 3652** or email pagalloway@hotmail.com or mobile phone number **07 763 912 670**.

THIS ISSUE COVERS DECEMBER AND JANUARY.
COPY DATE FOR THE FEBRUARY REVIEW IS – SUNDAY 21st JANUARY 2018.

Socials with Students 2017 and 2018 (Offers of help to David Thornborrow, please.)

Date	Theme	Catering and/or food theme
Tuesday 5th December 2017	Christmas, Advent & gifts	Special seasonal fayre [Volunteer(s) required to make panettone, Christmas cake, mince pies.]
Tuesday 16th January 2018	East meets west : Burns Night, Chinese New Year Sampling celebratory foods from around the world	Burns Night cuisine Procure Chinese Dim Sum Procure both meat and vegetarian haggis
Tuesday 13th February 2018	Pancakes – Pancakes – Pancakes! The history of Shrove Tuesday and special customs or traditions	Pancakes. [Volunteers required to make Pancakes]



Durham Foodbank update.

We are very pleased to let folks know that, following the Church Meeting discussions, the Foodbank will be starting on 3rd January 2018. The sessions will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. The setting up and clearing away will be either side of these times but we plan to work together on this project. The Foodbank will be having exclusive use of the Quiet Room for storage and equipment needed and they are very grateful for this space. They will be setting up in December to be ready for the January 2018 start. We wish them well and hope to offer additional help if needed.



The Liberal Jewish Community.

It is with sadness that we have to report that Hava and Bill Fleming will have to end their time with us using our premises on a Saturday for their Liberal Jewish Community meetings. This is due to planned surgery for both of them in the near future and they will be unable to lead the group. At the moment there are no alternatives for them but we would be delighted to welcome them back if their circumstances change. We have learned from them and their group especially about some of their traditions and their enthusiasm for community support. We especially remember Mitzvah day in 2016.

Our get well wishes go to both Hava and Bill.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS



WELL DONE ... to Janet and David Thornborrow and helpers (Judy, Win, Yvonne and others). A very enjoyable and well attended Coffee Morning at the Thornborrow's home on 8th November raised the excellent sum of **£359** (including Gift Aid) for the **Christian Blind Mission**. This very worthwhile charity is also the Church's chosen charity at present.



Advent Reflection - With flute and guitar
Waddington Street URC, Durham,
Monday December 11th at 7 p.m.
The evening will be led by Pauline James and Helen Cooper.



Carol Singing at Christmas.

Once again we will be carol singing with the Salvation Army Band on the Market Place on 23rd December from 10.30 - 11.00 a.m. Carol sheets will be provided.

We meet at St. Nic's Church first for a warming cuppa at 10ish.

Last year the event was welcomed by shoppers and some started joining in; and every carol is a prayer to our Lord Jesus. Please come along and join the Christian throng putting Jesus back into Christmas.

Melanie Eve, Barbara Tinsley, Malcolm Reay.



Notes from Elders' Meeting on 1st November 2017

1. The meeting opened with a reading (Jeremiah 17, verses 5-8) and prayer.
2. Foodbank- A successful meeting was held with foodbank staff to consider them hiring the premises. They could have the quiet room for storage and hire the hall on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Good discussion on both sides. Foodbank looking to start in January 2018. They will advise if what we are offering will suit their needs. They will be paying up front for any let.
3. Hava and Bill Fleming have cancelled all bookings on behalf of the Jewish community due to both suffering ill health. The York district will take over their patch. They appreciate all our help and fellowship.
4. District reports were given, and prayers offered. Donald advised the meeting that he wished to step down from being Church Secretary. The meeting thanked Donald for all his hard work in carrying out this role so efficiently and effectively for all those years.
5. Church Christmas cards – a final draft was circulated to the meeting. Printing was agreed with the following amendments. Print to be slightly larger. Quotes to be removed and the church website to be put on.
6. Safeguarding – Yvonne Melville and Janet Sarsfield will use the documents received from Synod to create safeguarding policy for our church.
7. Lumière – North Road have asked if we can help them serve teas/coffees during the Lumière weekend. Kath Ogilvie will contact Annette and find out dates and times before advertising request.
8. Student Vacancy- Janet to invite all interested people to a meeting to take this forward to establish a mission for them and establish how we will support them.
9. The meeting agreed to hold regular meetings on keeping the Church website expanded and up to date. The next one will be on 8 November at 7 p.m. in the church.
10. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 6 December at 7 p.m. Kathleen Ogilvie to chair and Janet Thornborrow to take the minutes.



(left) W.H. Auden ...
We are here on earth
to do good unto others.
What the others
are here for,
I have no idea.

(right) Prince Philip ...
When a man opens a
car door for his wife,
it's either a new car
or a new wife.



(left) John Glenn ...
As I hurtled through space,
one thought kept crossing
my mind – every part of
this rocket was supplied
by the lowest bidder.

(right) David Letterman ...
America is the only country
where a significant proportion
of the population believes that
professional wrestling is real but
the moon landing was faked.





EDITOR'S LETTER

DEAR READERS,

Les and I had a good time at the Blackpool Hilton for a Country Music weekend (Irish style). We enjoyed hour after hour of music and it occurred to me what a blessing it is to have music in our lives.



Current top tunes and golden oldies have different meanings for different people. Some tunes are uplifting while others are dramatic, sad or nostalgic. What Scot does not feel their blood stir when hearing "Flower of Scotland"? "Danny Boy" has universal appeal and "The Fields of Athenry" is very moving regardless of one's nationality.

"Fields of Gold" was adopted as the 2017 theme tune for Children in Need and this hauntingly beautiful song was sensitively performed by Katie Melua (left).

It is once again that time of year when Christmas songs and carols can be heard everywhere. I find "Silent Night" makes me feel emotional while the Salvation Army Band's music is such an affirmation of faith. We should all appreciate the wonderful gift of music and being able to hear it as it adds yet another dimension to life and to our celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

As we approach the end of this year and look ahead to 2018 I feel we have much to be thankful for as a church community. We have had excellent support from Ministers and Lay Preachers and, indeed, from our own Elders, so the pulpit has been filled each week and we have enjoyed a great variety of preaching, offering different insights into God's word. We have had excellent organ music from Peter and Robert.

Joining in events for Fundraising for the Christian Blind Mission has been pleasurable and provided some warm fellowship.

It now looks as if our premises are going to provide a home for the Durham Foodbank's operations and we can feel useful and that we are making a difference to people's lives in a positive way.

2017 has been a momentous year for Les and myself in that we celebrated our Golden Wedding in September and we realise how lucky we are to be able to say that.

Once again, my thanks go to Sandy Ogilvie for printing The Review each month and also to Win Surtees for preparing it for distribution to the congregation.

Thank you to anyone who has contributed an article or photographs of events. If **you** have any items of interest to share with readers of The Review please let me know.



My best wishes to you all, especially our housebound members, for the Christmas season and for 2018.

Lucille Thomson.



The next issue of The Review will be published on **Sunday 4th February 2018**
Contributions please to Lucille Thomson at church or BY POST or **Tel. 0191-3861052**
or e-mail **lesthomson@talktalk.net** - no later than **NOON on Sunday 21st January 2018**

CHRISTMAS ... by John Betjeman



The bells of waiting Advent ring, The Tortoise stove is lit again.
And lamp-oil light across the night, Has caught the streaks of winter rain,
In many a stained-glass window sheen, From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.

The holly in the windy hedge, And round the Manor House the yew
Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge, The altar, font and arch and pew,
So that the villagers can say, 'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.

Provincial Public Houses blaze, Corporation tramcars clang,
On lighted tenements I gaze, Where paper decorations hang,
And bunting in the red Town Hall, Says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.

And London shops on Christmas Eve, Are strung with silver bells and flowers,
As hurrying clerks the City leave, To pigeon-haunted classic towers,
And marbled clouds go scudding by, The many-steepled London sky.

And girls in slacks remember Dad, And oafish louts remember Mum,
And sleepless children's hearts are glad. And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'
Even to shining ones who dwell, Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.

And is it true, This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue, A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea, Became a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is, No loving fingers tying strings,
Around those tissue fripperies, The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent, And hideous tie so kindly meant.

No love that in a family dwells, No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells, Can with this single Truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine, And lives today in Bread and Wine.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

Lord when the wise men came from far,
 Led to thy cradle by a star,
 Then did the shepherds too rejoice,
 Instructed by thy angel's voice.
 Blest were the wise men in their skill,
 And shepherds in their harmless will.
 Wise men, in tracing Nature's laws,
 Ascend unto the highest cause;
 Shepherds with humble fearfulness
 Walk safely, though their light be less.
 Though wise men better know the way,
 It seems no honest heart can stray.
 There is no merit in the wise
 But love, the shepherds' sacrifice.
 Wise men, all ways of knowledge passed,
 To the shepherds' wonder come at last.
 To know can only wonder breed,
 And not to know is wonder's seed.

(Sidney Godolphin)



O Mary visited by courteous angel,
 Who drew from you
 Momentously - **Amen**
 O Lily lady, dare I ask;

In nine long months,
 In thirty-three short years,
 In three eternally long hours,
 Did you never wish that **yes, unsaid?**

(Anon)



CARRYING CHRIST

Into the hillside country Mary went
 carrying Christ, and all along the road
 the Christ she carried generously bestowed
 grace on those she met. She has not meant
 to tell she carried Christ. She was content
 to hide his love for her. But about her glowed
 such joy that into stony hearts love flowed,
 and even to the unborn John Christ's grace was sent.

Christ in the Sacrament of love each day
 dwells in my soul a little space and then
 I walk life's crowded highway, jostling those
 who seldom think of God. To these I pray
 that I may carry Christ, for it may be
 some would not know of Christ except through me.
 (Ruth Mary Fox)

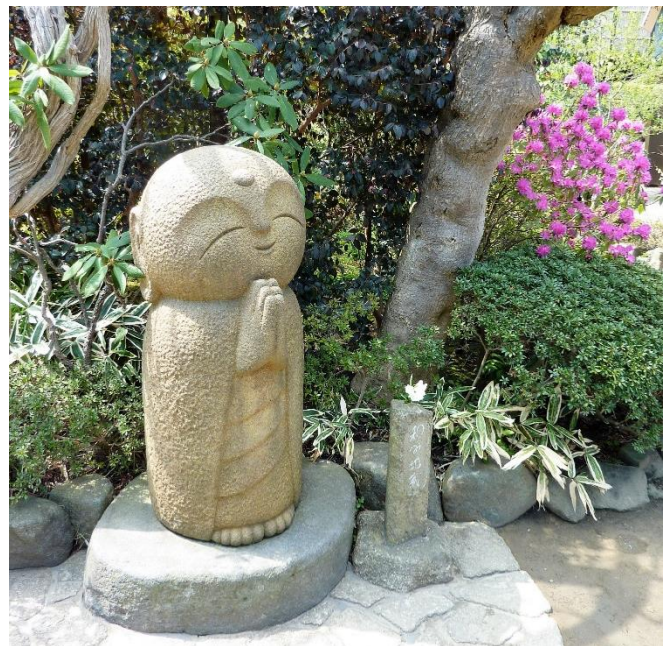


Mount Fuji



Highlights of a holiday in Japan – March 2017

Our holiday in Japan began in Tokyo, our hotel being situated in the district of Odaiba on the main island of Honshu, Japan consisting of a long ribbon of 6852 islands. Tokyo became the official capital in 1868 when the Emperor moved there from Kyoto and now it is a fascinating and dynamic city where, among the skyscrapers and busy streets, you can still find tranquil gardens and historic temples. Our city tour included the Imperial Palace where we all needed umbrellas and mackintoshes as it was absolutely pouring with rain. Unfortunately, the Palace Gardens were closed on the day so all we saw was the outer wall and gates guarded by sentries. The Palace is open for public admission for 1 day in November and 1 day in March when members of the Royal Family greet the visitors. We moved on to the temple town of Asakusa to see a Buddhist temple and a Shinto shrine before walking down the adjacent Nakamise shopping street, the latter with difficulty as the many Japanese visitors, all shorter in stature than us, each carried an umbrella whose spokes were on our eye level! There is real religious tolerance in Japan and apparently, in their homes, people have a Buddhist shrine alongside a Shinto shrine and it is quite common for a birth to be celebrated according to Shinto tradition, a marriage according to Christian tradition and a death according to Buddhist tradition. The Hase-Dera, a temple of the Jodo sect of Buddhism, is famous for its 11 headed statue of Kannon, the goddess of mercy. This temple is surrounded by wonderful gardens with blossom trees as well as lakes and a small Zen garden. A peppering of small statues were dotted around the garden in amongst the shrubs and flower beds, placed there by Buddhist parents as a memorial to their dead babies and toddlers, a very moving sight.



En-route to Kazanawa, we visited Kenrokuen Garden, one of the three best landscaped gardens and considered by many to be the most beautiful of all. Kenrokuen means having 6 factors and the garden received its name because of its 6 attributes that bring out the perfect landscape of the garden – spaciousness, tranquillity, artifice, antiquity, water courses and magnificent views. There was a cool



breeze blowing across the garden during our visit which must have chilled the several young ladies dressed in traditional kimonos but we enjoyed seeing the plum and cherry trees in blossom, the fountains and lakes, azaleas and irises, all set in a serene landscape and linked by footpaths and bridges.

In Kyoto, we visited a Zen Garden which I found to be disappointing as it is not what I would visualise as a garden as there are no plants, only a gravel surface with strategically placed rocks. This example had 15 rocks but no matter which angle you viewed the garden, you could never count the 15 rocks in view at the same time. While Japan is noted for its gardens, the people's homes do not have gardens so they all have lines of pots filled with flowers and shrubs lined up along their house wall.

The small town of Hakone stands on the shore of beautiful Lake Ashi and is one of Japan's most popular hot spring resorts watched over by the soaring, snow-capped Mount Fuji, still an active volcano although the last eruption was 300 years ago. An Onsen is a Japanese hot spring and bathing facility and inns are frequently situated around them. Our hotel offered indoor Onsen facilities and some of our group made time to try them out. There are strict rules pertaining to their use e.g. no shoes allowed as Onsen have traditional Japanese floors (tatami), all clothing is to be removed in the correct changing room (female changing rooms have pink curtains and male have blue curtains), bathers with tattoos are banned, hair is to be tied up to make sure it doesn't go into the bath water and no swimming or splashing is allowed.

We set off through the snowy landscape of Hakone for the Cultural Heritage Village in Shirakawa-go which is well known for the massive farmhouses in the gassho-zukuri style. These farmhouses have steeply pitched thatched roofs which resemble a pair of hands joined in prayer (gassho) and were designed to prevent the accumulation of snow and are the only examples of their kind in Japan. Our



next stop was at a paper factory where after watching the paper-making process we were instructed in the art and produced 3 cards each to keep as souvenirs of our visit and of our prowess! We continued on our journey to Kanazawa and were now below the snow line. We stopped to visit a typical farmer's house of the region, cold feet as shoes were removed and cups of green tea offered by the farmer's wife (fortunately small cups!)

before moving on to visit a Samurai house with coffered ceilings totally made of Japanese cypress and paintings of birds, flowers and beautiful ladies on the sliding door panels created by the family's personal painter. Cold feet again because of the teak floors but lovely gardens viewed as we walked around the rooms and with a lovely warm tea ceremony room where our cold feet recovered a little!

At the foot of the spectacular Japanese Alps, the city of Matsumoto is best known for its striking black and white timber and stone castle surrounded by a moat and beautiful parkland. Built in the 16th century, it is named as one of the country's national treasures and is Japan's best preserved castle



with a unique moon-viewing turret. The castle keep floors were solid teak which necessitated the removal of shoes but leather mules were offered to be worn during our visit but as they were all the same size and were quite large it was safer to go barefoot. To reach the top of the keep meant a climb of 160 stairs, the staircases being wooden and ladder-like with a gap between the steps of 18" in some places. It was a difficult ascent and an even more difficult descent! The most memorable aspect of this castle to me, was the warrior passage running around the perimeter of the first floor to enable the

soldiers to defend the castle from all sides. On our walk back to the coach we met a bride and groom in full traditional dress walking to the castle for their wedding photographs to be taken. It is the custom for the photographs to be taken before the ceremony, sometimes months in advance, to ensure good photographs taken in good weather in a suitably scenic location and during all of our visits to various parks and gardens, we always came across a bride and groom having their photographs taken.

(R) Prospective Bride and Groom at Kyoto Botanical Gardens



Takayama is known as "Little Kyoto" and was a thriving trading town during the Edo period and entire streets of elegant wooden buildings have been beautifully preserved. The Sannomachi streets of the old town were founded in 16th century and are now home to traditional tea houses and shops. The Festival Floats Exhibition Hall has many elaborately decorated floats on display, many several hundred years old, that are paraded through the streets of the town during festivals in spring and autumn. During our walking tour, we passed several "garages" that house the floats during the rest of the year, very tall and narrow buildings built to adjoin the home of the owner. Our journey to Kyoto was by the Thunderbird train, our main luggage being taken separately by road to Kyoto leaving us only with hand luggage to carry which was fortunate as the train stops at a station for 1 minute only to allow passengers to disembark and if you are too slow, you are taken on to the next station! The quiet, rapid train left Kazanawa station at exactly 2.17 p.m. and arrived at Kyoto at 4.37 p.m. precisely in accordance with its very accurate timetable. Our hotel had 4 restaurants but only 1 served Western style food. Our evening meal was included on our arrival but on other evenings it was advisable to book a table as, understandably, this particular restaurant was very popular and closed at 9 p.m. – the waiters reminding diners of this fact at 8.45 p.m.!

Kyoto, the former capital city of Japan, is one of the few places in Japan where Japanese traditional architecture remains in abundance and is the proud owner of 14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and a *Geisha* district. One of the World Heritage Sites is Nijo Castle, its buildings being the best surviving examples of castle palace architecture of Japan's feudal era. This castle demonstrates the security device known as "nightingale" floors; each nail in each floorboard fits into a wooden sleeve below the floor and they squeak together when anyone walks across the floor, the resulting squeaks sound like birdsong and warn the inhabitants of visitors! The Nishiji Textile Centre is an alliance of more than 700 small companies and has been the main centre for kimono and textile production for more than 1,000 years. The kimono is still worn by Geisha and Maiko and is often produced from a single bolt of fabric over 11 metres long and we admired beautiful examples of this craft during a kimono fashion show. The Golden Temple (see end of article) was our next stop, only a photo stop but the temple looked magnificent and shone brilliantly in the sunshine and the gardens were green and picturesque and of course we met the usual bride and groom (on next page) with their photographer!

Nara was founded in 710 and was Japan's first permanent capital. It is still a major religious centre. We visited the Todajii temple which is believed to be the largest wooden building in the world and which houses the largest bronze Buddha ever cast. On to the Kasuga Shinto Shrine with its many stone and metal lanterns which have been donated over the years by pilgrims. In the afternoon we witnessed a traditional tea ceremony, performed to our surprise by a man and followed this with a visit to the Sake Museum. Sake has a very distinctive and fruity taste and an alcohol content from 14% to 19%. There are approximately 2,000 sake breweries in Japan producing more than 10,000 products and we were pleased to be presented with free sample bottles of sake to take away with us! Just along the street from the museum was a canal bordered on both banks by fully flowering cherry blossom trees – a sight we had hoped to see on our visit to Japan as we had hoped our visit would coincide with the Sakura or cherry blossom season.



Our hotel was situated outside the city centre so on a free day we were obliged to travel on the subway. The station was very clean and tidy and the direction boards were very helpful so we soon found the relevant platform for our trip to the Botanic Gardens. The platforms have barriers along the edge with gates which open to give access to the train and the trains always stop exactly at the right spot – their doors perfectly aligned with the barrier gates! The trains were very clean with no litter and usually had passengers who appeared to be asleep in their seat but who never seemed to miss their station! At the Botanic Gardens we spent a pleasant morning wandering along the footpaths between the cherry blossom trees which were just coming into flower with some of them just in bud. On our return to the city centre we ventured into one of the department stores and were very interested to see all the cherry blossom goods on offer – everything from sweets and cakes to soap and perfume – all beautifully packaged but also beautifully wrapped in gift paper before being put into pretty paper bags to be handed to the customer.

Our Farewell Dinner was taken at a restaurant which served Washoku cuisine, the traditional food of Japan. The meal consisted of many courses and although we valiantly tasted all on offer, most of the meal was not eaten mainly because of the gelatinous texture of the food. A young girl, a Maiko (a trainee geisha) entertained us with dance and recorded music and told us of the training she was undergoing to become a fully-fledged geisha. She was wearing the traditional dress, hairstyle and makeup of the geisha and had a lovely personality to match her wonderful appearance as she visited each table to talk to the diners, pose for photographs and to answer any question relayed to her by our guide.

On our last morning in Kyoto, our hand luggage was left at the railway station to be collected later, thus leaving us free to take the sub-way to Keage and walk along the cherry blossom lined footpath to the Path of Philosophy before returning to collect our hand luggage and to board the Shinkansen (the Bullet train) to travel to Tokyo. We boarded at 2.15 p.m. and departed at 2.18 p.m., fortunately our hold luggage travelled separately by road. We enjoyed our packed lunch on the train as we sped towards Tokyo at a speed of 200 km per hour arriving at 4.33 p.m. Our hotel was situated close to the airport so the next morning our luggage was collected and conveyed to the Airport by truck leaving us ample time for a leisurely breakfast and time to amble around the hotel's landscaped garden and relax in the quiet lounge by the lakeside before returning to the busy reception area to catch the coach to take us to the airport.

At each of the hotels, our luggage was promptly delivered to our rooms, the rooms were always spotlessly clean and the bed linen as well as the towels were changed each day. On our arrival, our tour guide gave guidance on the use of the electronic toilets we would find not only in our bathrooms but also in public places and advised us to accustom ourselves to their use in private before using any public facilities. These toilets are sophisticated electronic devices with a dizzying array of functions, the most common being posterior wash, bidet, soapy spray, adjustable water temperature, warm air dry, heated seat, noisemaker (music), auto lid and self-washing bowl! We were also given guidance on Japanese etiquette e.g. shaking hands is common for introductions, there is no need to bow especially as you would need to know the correct degree of bow (90°, 45° or 15°); blowing your nose in public is considered rude while sniffing is generally OK; pointing is considered somewhat threatening and should be avoided, instead indicate direction with an open hand; as people carry umbrellas at the slightest chance of rain, avoid making people wet with your umbrella as restaurants and shops may provide plastic covers for your umbrella or umbrella racks. The towns were all free of graffiti, the roads free of potholes, cars were always clean and the many bicycles in Kyoto were always neatly parked in racks. The service given by staff in hotels, shops and railway stations was impeccable and we were always made to feel welcome guests in their country.

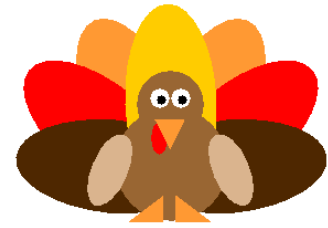
Doris Jackson

(Below – The Golden Temple mentioned on page 12)



The Twelve Days of Christmas (Or The Everlasting Turkey)

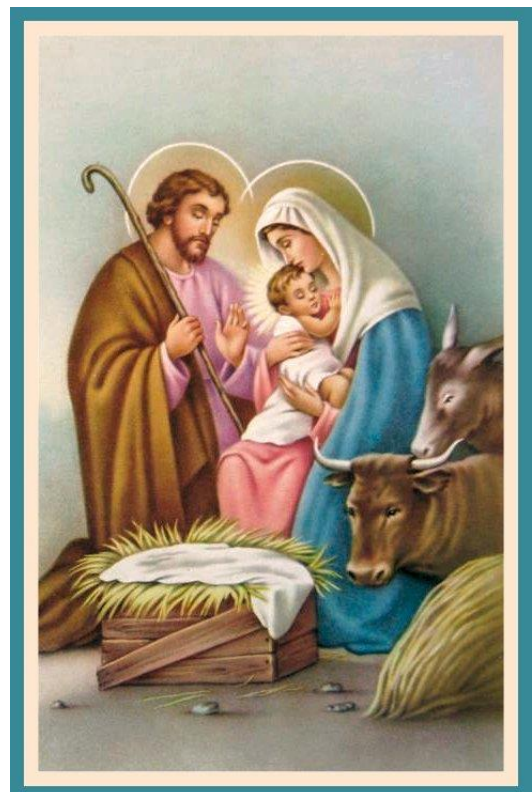
On the **first day** of Christmas my true love said to me:
I've bought a big, fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.
On the **second day** of Christmas much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.
On the **third day** of Christmas came the people from next door.
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.
On the **fourth day** of Christmas came relations, young and old.
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.
On the **fifth day** of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried.
But we were nice and warm inside – we had the turkey curried.
On the **sixth day** of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died,
As the children fought and bickered – we had turkey rissoles fried.
On the **seventh day** of Christmas my true love he did wince,
When he sat down at table and was offered turkey mince.
On the **eighth day** of Christmas the dog had run for shelter,
He'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of Alka Seltzer.
On the **ninth day** of Christmas by lunchtime Dad was blotto.
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.
On the **tenth day** of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew.
Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew.
On the **eleventh day** of Christmas the Christmas tree was moulting.
With chilli, soy and oyster sauce the turkey was revolting.
On the **twelfth day** of Christmas we had smiles upon our lips.
The guests had gone, the turkey too – **we dined on fish and chips!**



Lord of Surprises

Lord Jesus Christ,
you came to a stable
when men looked in a palace;
You were born in poverty
when we might have anticipated riches;
King of all the earth,
you were content to visit one nation.
From beginning to end
you upturned our human values
and held us in suspense.
Come to us, Lord Jesus.
Do not let us take you for granted
or pretend that we ever fully understand you.
Continue to surprise us so that, kept alert,
we are always ready to receive you as Lord
and to do your will.

(Donald Hilton B.1932)



China's Harbin Ice Festival where in temperatures between -17°C and -39°C they carve huge, intricate ice sculptures on which people can actually walk. Flood-lit at night the sculptures are amazing.



OUT AND ABOUT WITH URCHIN

Cold winter arrives with the winter solstice which this year is at 10.43 in the morning of 21st December and we will have reached the shortest day. The end of the year is nigh but before that we celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas. Nazareth, Nasrat in the local tongue, was somewhat of a backwater in lower Galilee, situated in a high valley. It was the home of Joseph, the village carpenter. There is an apocryphal tale that Joseph was employed by the father of Mary to extend his house and a refreshing drink of water was brought to Joseph by Mary and so the courtship began. He is believed to have been older than Mary but there is no way of confirming that or even by how much.

The old English song “The Cherry Tree Carol” begins ‘Joseph was an old man and an old man was he when he wedded Mary in the land of Galilee’. “Old” can mean anything from a few months to some years, but we can believe that he was older than Mary. But Mary became pregnant; she was well aware of the reason for this but Joseph was not. The Christmas story as told by Luke does not mention Joseph’s reaction to the pregnancy but Matthew does; From verse 18 to 24 in chapter 1, it is clear that he is not best-pleased which is hardly surprising, so he decided to break off the engagement. But then matters took a divine course. The devout Joseph had a dream; a dream in which an angel addressed him; he was not to be afraid to marry Mary for the Holy Spirit had brought about the baby in her womb, the baby was to be called Jesus. This acceptance would formally acknowledge that the baby was his son in the eyes of the world and the baby would be legitimized as coming from the direct ancestry of David.

Meanwhile the pregnant Mary had been living with her relation Elizabeth and for Joseph to marry her in a strict provincial community could be difficult. Tongues would wag, mischief would be made, but this is what the good Joseph does; the very next day. Any local consequences are deflected by a decree from Emperor Augustus, through Governor Quirinius, that a census be made and everyone should be registered in his home town and, for Joseph, that meant his home town of Bethlehem. He decides to take Mary with him on the 90 mile journey along the valley of the Jordan, past Jerusalem to Bethlehem, a journey that was to end in a stable. We all know about the stable; it is where Jesus was born and that is why we celebrate at Christmas. So, at this darkest time of the year, when we all need light and warmth and fellowship, we Christians celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Happy Christmas to you all!



ROTAS - SUNDAYS - PREACHERS - DECEMBER 2017 and JANUARY 2018

December 2017	3rd Pauline James	10th Revd John Durell Communion	17th Deacon Jane Middleton	Revd Ruth Crofton – 24th 10.45 a.m. Carol Service and Christmas day 25th – 10 a.m.	31st Revd John Durell
January 2018	7th Mrs. Frances Proud	14th Revd Canon Peter Dodd	21st Mrs. Mary Tribe	28th Revd Shaun Swithenbank	

ELDERS AND DOOR DUTIES - DECEMBER 2017 AND JANUARY 2018**ELDERS****DOOR DUTIES**

2017 - DECEMBER	3rd	Mrs. J. Sarsfield	Mr. & Mrs. L. Thomson
	10th	Mr. D. Shirer	Mrs. H. Cockburn
	17th	Mrs. Y. Melville	Mr. S. Ogilvie
	24th	Mrs. K. Ogilvie	Mr. M. Reay
	31st	Mr. R. Todd	Mrs. H. Todd
2018 – JANUARY	7th	Mrs. J. Thornborrow	Mrs. K. Clasper
	14th	Mrs. K. Clasper	Mrs. W. Surtees
	21st	Mrs. H. Cockburn	Dr. M. Munro
	28th	Mrs. D. Jackson	Mrs. C. Mitchell

If in doubt about your duties any Sunday, please check the list on the Vestibule notice board.

Please remember – You are responsible for arranging your own replacement.

**ELDERS' MEETINGS (Normally 1st Wednesday of month) at 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER 2017 and WEDNESDAY 10th JANUARY 2018
PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FOR JANUARY 2018**

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE (usually 3rd MONDAY of month) at 2 p.m.
But meet as arranged between the Committee Members**



FLOWER ROTA – DECEMBER 2017 AND JANUARY 2018

DECEMBER– Supervisor – Mrs. J. Graham JANUARY 2018 – Supervisor – Mrs. J. Graham

3rd	Advent	7th	Mrs. Y. Melville
10th	Advent	14th	VACANCY
17th	Christmas Flowers	21st	Mrs. Janet Sarsfield
24th	Christmas Flowers	28th	Mrs. Janet Sarsfield
31st	Christmas Flowers		

To provide flowers where there is a Vacancy or join the Flower Rota or donate to the Flower Fund, please contact Mrs. Jean Graham.



COFFEE ROTA – DECEMBER 2017 AND JANUARY 2018

December 2017

3rd	Kathleen Clasper, Barbara Tinsley
10th	Win Surtees, Joyce Duthie
17th	Helen Cockburn, Lucille Thomson
24th	Sue/Fred Robinson, Helen Cooper
31st	Jessie Goodall, Kath Ogilvie

January 2018

7th	Fiona Bowater, Malcolm Reay
14th	Janet Thornborrow, Judy Banister
21st	Heather Todd, Christiane Mitchell
28th	Yvonne Melville, Jean Graham

Please decide and agree on who is responsible for bringing the milk.
You are responsible for arranging your own replacement.



CHURCH CLEANING ROTA – DECEMBER 2017 AND JANUARY 2018

December 9th, 2017 - Christine Frame, Doris Jackson

January 6th, 2018 - Yvonne Melville, Stuart Melville



To all readers of The Review – You are wished a Peaceful and Happy Christmas and Good Health and Happiness in the New Year. (Editor)



[Nativity scene knitted by Yvonne Melville]



NEW YEAR'S EVE – [L. Thomson, December 2 017]

A time for looking back at the year that's gone.
A time to savour memories of events shared and things done.
A time to think of loved ones, no longer around.
A time to think of friendships old, and ones newly found.
A time to thank the Lord for the gift of yet another year.
A time to look ahead with hope in your heart and not fear.
A time to think of the many blessings in life.
A time to pray for a swift end to all strife.
A time to hope that man's inhumanity to man will end.
A time to realise that for this God His Son did send.

A time to hope that this world's resources will be shared.
A time to realise just how many people have cared.
A time to accept that we have truly been blessed.
A time to make sure refugees are less stressed.
A time to care for those who are sick and alone.
A time to remember Lord Jesus, sat by the throne.
A time to appreciate Church and Preachers of the Word.
A time to recognise and support the work of our Lord.
A time to show love to both neighbour and friend.
A time to rejoice in God's love without end.

