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In this edition

2. Gift Service Donations
3. Elders and Events
4. TLC Youth Update
5. Church Meeting Reports
- 6-7. TDOR Service
8. Adventures with Godly Play
9. Pilgrimage & Estrangement
10. Seedlings
- 11-12. Calendar

Waiting Time, By Rev Fiona Bennett

Advent is a time when we remember stories of people waiting for change: The slaves in Egypt waited to be free; The people wandering in the desert waited for an identity and a home; The Kingdoms waited for good kings; The exiles waited to return home; The prophets waited for a time when the society around them would be just; Many women throughout the Bible waited for a child, as did Mary & Joseph; The wisemen were waiting for a great king; Jesus waited for people to understand; The early church waited for Jesus to return...

And this is just a small snapshot of the stories of waiting in the Bible, but they are all waiting for something major in their lives and world to change. Often when we find ourselves in situations of change we work hard at saying good goodbye to what we are leaving and at

grasping the new beginnings, but perhaps we also need to acknowledge that sometimes we simply find ourselves in an in-between waiting time and accept that we cannot force new beginnings. Easter Saturday and Moses & the Hebrews' 40 years in the wilderness are both in-between waiting time stories. So how do we wait well?

There is a model of change or transition called the Chaordic Path (movement from chaos to order) which suggests that to wait well is to embrace the waiting time. Waiting well is not spending our energy pining for the past or worrying anxiously or resentfully about the future, but learning to tend well to the present. To be alive and tend to God, ourselves, each other and the earth.

Tending to life is not self absorption or destruction, it is making healthy, honest choices and embracing the gifts of living which we find around us. It

Getting Involved

Within AUC there are Ministry Teams which are responsible for different areas of Church Life. If you would like to know more or get involved with one of these please e-mail the contact person.

Centre, Property & Finance

Tom Murray

treasurer@augustine.org.uk

Children

Kirsty Murray

juniorchurch@augustine.org.uk

Communication

Eilidh Carmichael

eilidh.carmichael@augustine.org.uk

Our Tribe (LGBTI Ministry)

Rev Maxwell Reay

associateminister@augustine.org.uk

Peace & Justice

Harriet Davidson

harriet.davidson@augustine.org.uk

Pastoral & Mental Health

Anne MacKenzie

anne.mackenzie@augustine.org.uk

Worship

Rev Fiona Bennett

minister@augustine.org.uk

Young People

Matt Baines

matt.baines@augustine.org.uk

To get involved volunteering within AUC or the local community:

AUC Volunteering

Fiona Somerville

rota@augustine.org.uk

Local Community

Volunteering

Della Morris

della.morris@augustine.org.uk

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is understood in the Chaordic model that when we learn to tend well to the waiting time, the shoots of new beginnings come and we are in a much better place to be able to respond to them and embrace the new journey they take us on.

In the midst of leaving the EU, the UK is in a waiting time; As technology develops and jobs of the future have not yet emerged, students are in a waiting time; As old habits and familiar rituals die, we find ourselves in a waiting time; The church as an institution in the UK is in a waiting time. We cannot force grow new beginnings, so how can we as individuals, as a society and as a church tend well to the waiting time in which we find ourselves today?

May you have an Advent and Christmas rich in light and hope.

Gift Service on Sunday 16th December



There are three ways we're encouraging people to participate in our gift service, but don't be overwhelmed. If you are able, feel free to pick one way to contribute:

Financial gifts will be going to Christian Aid (in lieu of sending Christmas cards among the congregation). Find out more on p.5.

Toiletries, socks or sweets will be distributed by the chaplains at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. Please bring the gifts unwrapped.

Warm winter clothing for all ages, plus children's educational supplies will be sent to Syrian Refugees in Lebanon via Edinburgh Direct Aid.

As ever, thank you for your generosity!

AUC Elders Elections 2018

Three Elders were elected to serve AUC, each for 3 year periods:

Linda Harrison
Ben Forsyth
Stephen Hoare

All 3 are already ordained URC Elders and they will be inducted on Sunday 20th January.

Christmas Carol Singalong

Friday 28th December

5.30pm

Anne MacKenzie's House

Bring your voice and instruments.

Come and enjoy the music, the fun and light refreshments.

Everybody is welcome.

Please ask the church office if you don't know the address!

Only Justice

Service of Prayer and Worship for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



Monday 21st January at 7.30pm

Palmerston Place Church

With Rev Colin Sinclair

Moderator Elect of the General Assembly of
the Church of Scotland

Hosted by Edinburgh Churches Together

A reception will follow the service

*'Justice, and only justice, shall you
pursue'*

Deuteronomy 16: 18-20

Pastoral Care

"...bearing with one another in love..."

(Ephesians 4:2)

At AUC, we aim to provide a web of care which promotes growth in relationships and good spiritual/mental health, through both informal and formal contacts. If you are looking for individual support please contact a minister: **Rev Fiona Bennett** (minister@augustine.org.uk) or **Rev Maxwell Reay** (associateminister@augustine.org.uk). As well as offering 1:1 support in the setting which is most appropriate for you, they can link you with the pastoral visiting team which offers regular support to the housebound.

Prayer requests are welcomed. They can be shared with the ministers directly or via the Church Office. If you would like support due to a mental health issue, you would be welcome at the Mental Health Drop-in, held weekly on Tuesdays 10.30am-12pm in the Sanctuary. This is hosted by AUC and run by the NHS Lothian Spiritual Care team. Further details available on through Maxwell.

TLC Youth December Update

Dinosaur Doodles

Talie Coleman submitted these fantastic drawings for September's 'Doodle Challenge'. We were impressed by the way he expressed his passion for dinosaurs, wildlife, a great eye for detail and a strong sense of imagination.

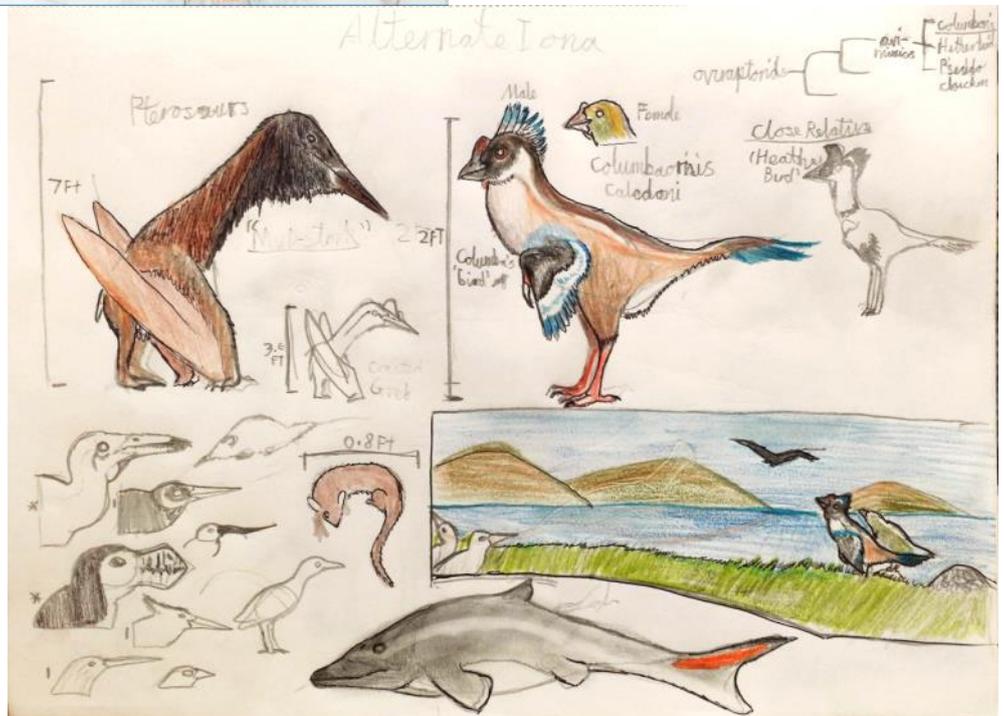
A solitary Pachyrhinosaurus overlooking a wilderness scene.



What if the dinosaurs never went extinct? Talie drew these speculative drawings of species that might have evolved on an alternate Iona.

Bowling Bonanza

It was really great to see so many young people join us on Sunday 9th November for our bowling trip, including newcomers to TLC Youth from both Augustine and Greyfriars. It was also wonderful to welcome onboard the talented Jude Hallewell as our regular helper. Much fun and many 'High Five's were shared!



We hope you enjoy this wee peek into the fun we've shared in the youth group this Autumn and look forward to having more interesting and exciting stories to share in 2019.

Matt Baines

All photos used by permission. Apart from the dinosaurs. They couldn't be reached for permission.

Church Meeting Reports: November

Three Elders were elected to serve AUC at our November meeting, each for 3 year periods – Linda Harrison, Ben Forsyth and Stephen Hoare. Tom was re-elected as Treasurer.

We heard that the Church Council met with Rev David Scott (Minister of Duke St and Saughtonhall URCS and who has some shared responsibilities for URC churches south of the Forth) in order to familiarise David with our thoughts, priorities and community, and to learn what David knows and thinks about the areas and churches in Leith and Saughtonhall.

We are having a trial, over several lunches, of an additional time of friendship with some students, new to Christianity. After our soup, bread, cheese and fruit lunches, people are encouraged to stay on till about 2.30-3pm with the new students to engage in craft activities, to play board games and chat.

It was agreed that our contribution to the URC Ministry & Mission would be increased, as suggested by URC General Assembly, by 3.5% for 2019.

Reports were also received from Church Life Ministry Teams on the progress being made on our new website; on Junior Church and TLC Youth activities; and on plans for 2019 to develop pilgrimages in central Edinburgh. As a result of our pilgrimage plans, Fiona will use themes within Lent and our April Church Meeting to focus on pilgrimage. Within AUC, in May we'll have short 'pilgrimages' around the displayed "stained glass" effect windows produced by members and friends for Scottish Mental Health Arts Festivals over the past 5 years.

Kathleen Ziffo

Blessed are the Peacemakers...



As our thoughts turn once again to sending seasonal greetings, please consider making a contribution to the work of Christian Aid and sign our communal AUC Christmas Card. Our communal card allows us to show that we will be thinking of our AUC friends and family as we celebrate, whilst contributing too to the invaluable work of Christian Aid in helping people and communities to recover from conflict.

Violence destroys lives and tears communities apart. But whilst peace is broken every day, it is also being built, by strong women and men working to heal their communities. Your gift, of any amount, could help pay for counselling, art therapy and life-skills classes for a young refugee. It could give a traumatised child the care they need to recover and move on.

In our giving this season we can stand together with those on the frontline of peacemaking, bringing healing, wholeness and hope to those directly affected by conflict.

You can read more here <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal>

Honouring a few of our dead

We were marking Transgender Day of Remembrance and we couldn't read out all the names.

We used to be able to, but the number grows each year and now there are too many.

Alex, the celebrant, had brought this very beautiful tree into church.

It represented the tree of life.

Each leaf had a name, and each name belonged to a trans person murdered last year.

Murdered just for being who we are.

When the time came, he suggested we each take a cluster of leaves off the tree and take them home.

And find out what we could about each name.

And by the end, the tree was completely bare.

And so I went home, and this is the story of the names I found.

Bruna Ferrari was killed on the fifteenth February 2018 in Concórdia do Pará, Brazil. It is not known how she died, or why, or anything about her. Except that she was 17 years old.

Verónica Carvajal was killed on the 27th November 2017 in La Paz, in Bolivia. She was 25 years old and she worked in a bar. She was strangled by her partner, Carlos Alberto V, because she was the breadwinner and had refused to give him the money she had earned that night.

Macumba was killed on the 11th November 2017 in Veracruz, Mexico. No one knows how old she was, or what she did for a living. Someone ran her over with a car. And then they fled. They have not been found.

Lucky Salavuki was killed on the 17th May 2018 in Suva, Fiji. She was found on the foreshore. She was 23 years old. She was an activist, who had

recently come out as trans and she was excited about contributing to the movement to improve transgender peoples lives. Her friends described her as an outgoing person who was always happy to make other people smile.

Rafella Rotocalco was killed on the 11th September 2018 near Rome. Her body was found on a beach. The cause of death is not known. Her age is not known.



She came from São Paulo, Brazil, was stunningly beautiful and worked as a sex worker.

Lorrany Lhoane Oliveira was killed on the 26th December in Santaluz in Brazil. She was 18 years old.

Blanca was killed on the 27th January 2018 in La Vega in the Dominican Republic. She was a sex worker. Her age is unknown. She was stabbed. There were no witnesses. Her murderer has not been found.

Chandraiah was killed on the 26th May 2018 in Hyderabad, India. Her occupation is listed as, quote, 'other'. She was 52 years old. She was beaten to death by a mob who had gathered in the mistaken belief that she was a child kidnapper.

Charly was killed on the 22nd March 2018 in Puebla, in Mexico. She was a hairdresser and beautician. She had been suffering aggression from strangers for quite a while. She was 25 years old.



Marilyn Cipriany Guzmán was killed on the 30th December 2017 in Medellín, Columbia. She did sex work. She was 19 years old. Not long before her death she gave a newspaper interview in which she said that whenever she tried to get a job or go into a shopping centre she suffered insults and discrimination. But this did not happen to her on the street, she said. *"People think that because people like me work on the street, we have no morals. But we are human beings and we have the right to equality."*

Jessica González was found dead on the 11th January 2018 in Veracruz, Mexico, two weeks after being reported missing. She was a sex worker. The cause of death is unknown. Her age is unknown.

Phylicia Mitchell was killed on the 23rd February 2018 in Cleveland, USA. She was 45 years old and a hairdresser and beautician. She was shot in the chest in the street outside her home. Her partner Shane said *"Everyone loved her. She was just so funny and so kind"*.

Krispim Sousa de Araujo was killed on the 14th August 2018 in Mossóro, Brazil. Her age is not known. Her occupation is not known. She was shot three times and dead on arrival in hospital.

Karla Patricia Flores-Pavon was killed on 9th May in Dallas, USA. She was strangled in her apartment. Her occupation is unknown. She was 18 years old.

Maria Luisa Velásques Zuñiga was killed on the 12th November 2017 in Puerto Cortés, Honduras. She had visited her mother a fortnight before and had not mentioned being in any kind of trouble. Her family had asked the police to investigate her death because she meant no harm to anyone. Her occupation is not known. She was 39 years old.

J. A. Marín Marín was killed on the 1st February 2018. Their occupation is not known. They were 26 years old. They were stabbed while out walking with a friend.

Linda was killed on the 26th June 2018 in Estado de Mexico, Mexico. She was 30 years old. Her occupation is not known. She was asphyxiated.

Lohane was killed on the 23rd January 2018 in Governador Newton Bello, Brazil. Her age is not known. Her occupation is not known. She was stabbed by her boyfriend in a fit of jealousy.

Abya Passos Mantovanny was killed on the 15th September 2018 in Cuiba in Brazil. She was a sex worker. She was 33 years old. She was stabbed by her boyfriend in a club.

Joan Thabeng was killed on the 11th November 2017 in Mohlakeng in South Africa. Her age was not reported. She was a clerk. She had been on her way to visit her boyfriend. Police appear to have made no serious attempt to find her murderers.

May they all rest in peace. May eternal light shine upon them.

Jo Clifford

This article is a slightly edited version of a blog post. You can read the full post here:

http://diary.teatrodomundo.com/2018/11/honouring-few-of-our-dead.html?fbclid=IwAR2orrsTrs8mPq4cemLVWO3BmriNikf_4PhVqk3NJTZUZU6wuJKbm_QDf_c



Inspired by the Transgender Remembrance service, Fiona Macdonald set us this beautiful picture of her prayer space, which now includes the names of five trans people lost this year, and one unnamed person: a space to pray, honour, and remember.

Adventures with Godly Play

I recently attended the Godly Play Scotland Conference in Inverness. Thank you to AUC for supporting me to do this.

I chose a couple of workshops – one to support Godly Play storytelling with older people and to explore adapting Godly Play stories for people with dementia. There is going to be a further training offered on this in April called 'Stories for the Soul' and I hope to attend/develop this.

The other workshop I chose was about 'Building the Circle' dealing with issues of inclusion. I wondered if it might cover similar things and



maybe I should have chosen something else – but it turned out to be really interesting and gave me so much to think about! The leader presented a story about our experience of God and spirituality. Can you see the objects in the picture? Do any of them ring true for

you? I have asked for a copy of the script as I think this would be a lovely story to do at AUC.

The next conference is not until 2020 in Portobello – a bit easier to get to! If anyone is interested in exploring this rich storytelling tradition, feel free to speak to me.

Fiona Macdonald

November's Walk & Talk was a little different from usual. We welcomed Mercat Tours guide Simon Bendle to AUC and he led us on our own special walk down The Royal Mile to Canongate.

Regular Walk & Talkers were joined by a number of other AUC members. Together, we heard lots of fascinating new facts about a street we thought we knew well – and at the same time we got a sense of all the background preparation that goes into making a guided walk successful.

Despite the coldness of the day, Simon kept us engaged with his enthusiasm, good humour and ability to pick up on all our questions. He knew how to find the quiet spots in which to talk, and how to use an anecdote to say something about the broader story of this historic thoroughfare.

As we continue to think about how we at AUC might develop urban pilgrimages that help us connect with our visitors and our neighbourhood, experiences such as Simon's tour are invaluable resources in our planning process. A number of those on the walk have fed back their responses to the occasion, which is really helpful. Thanks to them, and to Simon and Mercat Tours for making the event happen.

If you missed November's Walk & Talk but fancy the opportunity to try out a guided history walk, another company – Local Eyes (a tenant in our building) – is offering members of the congregation and groups that use AUC a chance to try their Old Town Walking Tour for free. To find out more, contact chris@localeyestours.co.uk



Laurence Wareing

Stand Alone

Did you know: *1 in 5 families are affected by estrangement? 5 million people in the UK have no contact with one or more family members?* It can be helpful to know that you are not alone if you are experiencing this. The figures may well be even higher for the LGBTI community.

The Stand Alone charity has been supporting people in estrangement for 5 years now and is expanding. It is currently based in England and offers support groups and therapeutic workshops. Its website has good information and advice about estrangement, including advice regarding festive season challenges. It has current campaigns to help students in particular and an active Twitter feed linking to press articles.

I believe it all began when the founder Becca Bland published an article about her experience of estrangement. This has helped so many people, because there is often stigma around speaking up about this. There is much to ponder about how churches could help and support this aspect of life's journey.



Helplines:

Stand Alone: www.standalone.org.uk (for those experiencing family estrangement)

LGBT Support: 0300 123 2523

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline: 0800 1111

Rape Crisis: 8088 010 302

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

Edinburgh Crisis Centre: 0808 8010414

Our module in December is 'Advent' and we will explore this through a Godly play story, followed by a Feast.

After that we will be rehearsing and then following a Journey through Advent with music and readings for All Ages.

"The Church learned a long time ago that people need a way to get ready to enter or even come close to a mystery like Christmas. The Church set aside four weeks to get ready. This is such a great mystery that it takes that long to get ready. During this time, we are all on the way to Bethlehem."

Image from www.godlyplayfoundation.com

Words from "Advent" - in *The Complete Guide to Godly Play Volume 3*.



Something to ponder...

"Just as in spiritual direction with adults, to help children or young people on their spiritual journey means honouring and enabling them to be who they really are, rather than a project where the goal is to turn out more people 'like us'. Perhaps as adults, when working towards spiritual maturity, we should pay attention to maintaining or reconnecting with the features our spirituality had so naturally in our earlier years, to come closer to entering the Kingdom by becoming more like the child."

From the article "Spirituality as a Natural part of Childhood" by Rebecca Nye.



Here's a few snaps of some delicious goods whipped up by Junior Church. Don't they look brilliant?!



Calendar

Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC, George IV Bridge. All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later updates on website/notice sheet

January		Season of Epiphany
Sunday 6 th	11am	Morning Worship with Communion, led by Karl Macrae, preacher Fiona
	1-3pm	TLC Youth Group
Monday 7 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: Mr Rintoul – Film Day
Friday 11 th	10am	Walk & Talk
Sunday 13 th	9.15am	Contextual Bible Study – Luke 1: 1-24 'Beginnings'
	11am	Morning Worship, led by Fiona, preacher John Miller
	12.15-1.30pm	Church Business Meeting
	3-5pm	Our Tribe
Monday 14 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: Currie Kirk Singers
Tuesday 15 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study
Sunday 20 th	9.15am	Living the Questions Series: The Lives of Jesus
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, with Induction of Elders, led by Fiona
Monday 21 st	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: Bring & Buy
Tuesday 22 nd	7.30-9pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation
Thursday 24 th	1.30-3pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation
Sunday 27 th	9.15am	'How to read the Book of Revelation'
	11am	Morning Worship for Homelessness Sunday, led by Karl Macrae, preacher Fiona
	12.15-2pm	Burns Lunch and Entertainment
Monday 28 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: The Royal Mile with Wendy Doran
Tuesday 29 th	7.30pm	Living the Questions Series: The Myth of Redemptive Violence
February		
Sunday 3 rd	9.15am	Contextual Bible Study – Genesis 32: 22-31 'Wrestling with God'
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion for Scottish Churches Housing Action Sunday, led by Fiona, preacher Laurence Wareing.

Junior Church welcomes families in all their wonderful diversity. We do our best to offer a safe and nurturing space for families and their friends. We have varied activities each week, from storytelling, to crafts, games and video making. We have a crèche for little ones and baby changing facilities are available. We use materials to appeal to children's different learning styles using the PowerXpress curriculum, and also use Godly Play (www.godlyplay.org.uk).

Children at Augustine are welcome to receive communion and to fully participate in the life of the church. Children regularly help during services, and sometimes serve communion to the wider church community.

Please feel free to contact us using the details on p.2 of Seeds if you have any questions.

Calendar

Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC, George IV Bridge. All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later updates on website/notice sheet

December		Season of Advent
Sunday 2 nd	10am	Advent Choir Rehearsal (open to all)
	11am	The Prophets: Morning Worship with Communion, preacher Mike Holroyd
	12.15-2.30pm	Advent Lunch followed by decoration making and Amnesty letter writing
Monday 3 rd	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: Christmas Cards
Tuesday 4 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study – Luke 1: 1-24 'Beginnings'
Friday 7 th	5.30pm	'Nollaig Chridheil à Dùn Èidean' BBC Alba Christmas Service Recording at Greyfriars
Sunday 9 th	10am	Advent Choir Rehearsal (open to all)
	11am	The Holy Family: Morning Worship, led by Laurence Wareing, preacher Rev David Paton-Williams
	1-3pm	TLC Youth Group: Find Your Rhythm
	3-5pm	Our Tribe: Big Sing
Monday 10 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC: Christmas Lunch (pre-booked)
Tuesday 11 th	7.30pm	Living the Questions Series: The end of the world?
Saturday 15 th	10am-12.30pm	Carol Singing for Christian Aid at the Farmers' Market on Castle Terrace, with St Columba's by the Castle
Sunday 16 th	10am	Advent Choir Rehearsal (open to all)
	11am	The Shepherds: Advent All Age Gift Service with Nativity & Communion led by Fiona and Junior Church (see p.2)
	1-5pm	Edinburgh Advent Open Days: AUC open to visitors
	6-8.30pm	Family Ceilidh at Greyfriars Kirk. Book via Kirk Office on 225 1900 or email administrator@greyfriarskirk.com (Adults £5/Family £10)
Saturday 22 nd	6-6.30pm	'Worship in the Community' with the Residents Association of the Grassmarket
Sunday 23 rd	10am	Advent Choir Rehearsal (open to all)
	11am	The Wise Ones: Advent All Age Worship, preacher Laurence Wareing
	2-2.30pm	Service of the Longest Night, led by Fiona and Laurence Wareing
Season of Christmas		
Tuesday 25 th	10.30-11.15am	Christmas Day Celebration Worship, led by Fiona
Friday 28 th	5.30pm	Christmas 'At Home': refreshments, carols and friendship at Anne MacKenzie's home (see p.3)
Sunday 30 th	11am	Morning Worship, preacher Linda Harrison

PTO for the calendar for January...

Please note the deadline for material for the Feb issue is Sunday 27th January.

DISCLAIMER: Although we check all information, as ever we can give no warranties as to accuracy or relevance and encourage active checking. The views expressed in our newsletter are those of the individual contributor, they are not necessarily those of AUC or the editor.