

COMMUNITY
CONNECTION
CHURCH

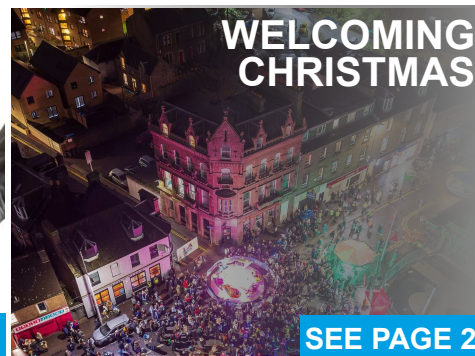
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CHRISTMAS



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BRIGHT STREET BEACON

LOCHEE LOCAL NEWS

Winter Edition

No. 3

FREE!

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A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS

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TASTY TREATS ON THE HIGH STREETS



TABLE TALK

When my kids look back on their childhood, one of the things I hope they'll remember with gladness is the time spent at the end of the day, gathered around the family table for a meal.

It's the most treasured time of the day for me, sitting with my favourite people, listening to everyone's stories, the jokes, the news, the latest scientific facts the youngest wants to tell us all.

BY KATY WRAIGHT

Just being able to sit back and relax and enjoy the food in front of me and the faces around me. If you wanted to get to know us, to find out who we really are and what we care about, then joining us for a family meal would be the thing to do. This gathering together for a meal, this "table fellowship", sets the tone for our whole family. It helps us show our kids what is

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important to us. It's a place where we train them to be kind and thoughtful, to be thankful for what they have, and to be generous as we extend fellowship to others. It helps us connect when we've been doing different things throughout the day, and it's a time of calm and a chance to rest and be refreshed in the midst of busy schedules.

And for me it's a fun opportunity to be creative, to enjoy making things look and taste and smell good! It doesn't cost much to give a few nice touches to show that this is a special time. I like to put a bright table runner out every evening and have one of the kids set the table nicely. On Saturday evening, to make it extra-special, we'll put out some candles, napkins or flowers - one of my girls likes to put out arrangements of leaves or flowers from the garden. Right now we're blessed to have a big table that we can all fit around with room to spare, but you don't need much space to make it work. In one previous flat we had a wee table that we would set for dinner and squeeze around, then fold away for the rest of the day. And the meals don't have to be fancy to be worth eating together. Sometimes it's just a bowl of pasta and some grated cheese, but even then we can sit and laugh and enjoy. There's a verse in the Bible that says, "Better a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it". This reminds us that even if the food isn't all that great, we're better off if we're in fellowship together than if we're having a great feast (fattened ox, anyone?) with grumbling hearts and grumpy faces!

Maybe you feel like you don't have time for all this - time is a precious thing, I know, and it rarely feels like there's enough of it, but we all make time for the things we love. As Christians we have much love and joy in our fellowship with Jesus, and so we try and imitate that in some small way in our family and our church community. Jesus even says to us in the Bible: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me". You have a standing invitation!

Lochee Lights Switch On

BY NAOMI WRAIGHT

On Wednesday 26 November, locals enjoyed the Lochee light switch on.

People of all ages gathered at the beautiful church of St. Mary's where we sang traditional hymns and saw the story of the Nativity enacted. St. Mary's Primary School choir and the Ancrum school choir both came and sang Christmas songs for us, as well as the folks from the Lochee Linties. Deacon Jim Murphy talked to us about Jesus, explaining to us that when we celebrate Christmas we are actually celebrating Jesus' birth. We were then led down the street by the Boys' Brigade procession where everyone gathered round and the lights were switched on! There was a wonderful community feeling as we walked through the festive streets filled with people and chatter. On arrival at Lochee Parish Church we were offered refreshments while the excellent Dundee Instrumental Brass Band played carols. Faith, age 9, said that she especially enjoyed the band and the Boys' Brigade procession, which was echoed by Ella, age 14, who added that it was lovely to walk down the road seeing all the bright lights and huge bubbles. It was very much enjoyed and was a great start to the Christmas season.



Stackers is a new restaurant addition to our high street specialising in smash burgers.

Opened by Fahad Usman, it was born out of his love for food after he noticed a gap in the market for a truly epic, street-food inspired takeaway. He sought to create a 'stacked with flavour' experience, using high quality, locally-sourced ingredients. It is clear that this business is his passion. When asked what he enjoys the most, Fahad said, "Without a doubt, it's the buzz of seeing people enjoy our food and being part of the local community. There's nothing better than hearing a customer rave about our burgers or seeing families enjoy a feast after a long day. We're not just slinging food; we're creating moments,

whether it's a cheeky treat or a go-to dinner. Building those connections and getting to serve up happiness is incredibly rewarding." And community is what Lochee is all about. We love their range of meal offers, ideal for families and groups. They include juicy smash burgers, secret sauce, crispy fried chicken (the best, in our opinion!), fresh salad, fries and a drink. Not to forget their large selection of mouth-watering desserts. If you're really hungry, Fahad recommends the 'Double Stack' burger with a side of loaded fries. While seeking to be innovative with new flavours and perfecting their craft, Stackers have a heart to cement themselves as a much-loved local spot. Stackers seeks to produce big, bold flavours, built to satisfy cravings. They certainly satisfied ours.

At the Heart of the High Street



God Made Everything Very Good

BY DAVID HOLT

"God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good," (Gen. 1:31a).

As the author of Genesis expands a little further on the creation story he highlights that when God had created Adam, "it was not good for man to be alone." So God creates a helper, Eve. In the original language "helper" is a fascinating word and if you're interested, I would suggest reading further. But broadly this word indicates that there is something that is required for man to truly flourish as he still needed someone else. By creating this "helper" God improves the situation, so much so that He says it's "very good."

This story isn't just a commentary on companionship, or friendship or even romantic relationships. This is about a fundamental created order which reminds us that God created humanity for community. A community that, when it is flourishing, has God in the centre. If you were to read further in the story we see that it all falls apart when man rejects God's created order and puts himself in the place of God. We call this sin.

This time of year most people take extra time to spend it with friends and family, community. It can be a real joy for many to reunite with those people we don't get to see every day. But for some of us it can be a horribly lonely period as we're reminded

of those who are not here. Waking up on Christmas morning to an empty house can be lonely. Even if that is how you spend every other day of the year, there is something particularly harsh on that Christmas morning. I don't think it's a stretch to say God declares that experience as "not good." Maybe it is supposed to point us to something greater.

God does have an answer for sin, and He put a community on earth to reflect what good should look like: the church. You may be reading this and struggle to see how the church can be the "good community" that I'm referring to. You might even have been hurt by the church in the past. The church certainly isn't yet perfect. Equally you may be reading this and wondering what church is all about; it's not something you have ever really interacted with. The church is part of God's plan for humanity.

Christmas, the story of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, started in a middle eastern animal shelter 2000 years ago. It is a story that continues with the birth of the church and is a story that is continuing today. Church is family, the children of God. It is where heaven meets earth. It's where broken people can be restored and where you can be most fully known and loved.



What's your favourite thing about Christmas?

The presents? The family time? The food? Just the feeling of anticipation and enjoyment in the air? Our fridge is always full around Christmas time, and I have always loved helping my mum out getting ready for the week of family visits and feasting that generally accompanies it. There's a day of mince-pie making. There's the log fire burning in the living room. There's the annual turkey-or-ham debate. There's a never-ending stream of group efforts and conspiracies about what to

A Christmas Carol

BY BETHAN WRAIGHT

buy for whom, and how we can possibly think of everything on time. Much of the time, peace and quiet seems like one of the greatest gifts the Lord can give us, but at Christmas, the busyness is part of the fun.

I love it when the Christmas carols come out, fairy lights start appearing in the neighbours' houses, and we review the list of Christmas movies to decide which we want to watch this time round. Cold weather and dark days only complement the glowing warmth coming from the windows, and the lights twinkling on the trees.

As a reader, I know the value of a good book to put you in the proper Christmas mood, too. On the shelves in our house are a bunch of books suitable for Christmas, but the most classic of them has got to be *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens. The version our family has is large and easy to read with beautiful illustrations by Quentin Blake. All about the necessity in life for celebration and family, this book is the first I would think of in the genre of Christmas literature. If you're looking for something new to read this Christmas, give it a try! Explore the soul of Christmas with Scrooge as he's taken on the journey of a lifetime with three magical messengers, despite his opinion that Christmas is a "humbug". For those who want something to do with younger children, *The Muppets Christmas Carol* is a cheerful film version of the book, which captures just the same spirit of giving and receiving.

The Poison of Pity



Soranus of Ephesus, 2nd century AD, wrote the first known manual on female reproductive health, gynaecology.

One heading reads, "How to Recognise a Newborn That is Worth Rearing." His advice, if the baby was not worth keeping, was to throw the child onto the rubbish dump to die and try again. Heinrich Himmler the master planner behind the German Holocaust would applaud such an approach. He once said, "There is nothing particular about man. He is but a part of this world."

If mankind is just one part of nature, why would we hesitate at the idea of leaving a baby out to die. Many animals abandon their sick or weak babies. If we look at the world from a purely scientific, natural selection point of view, it makes sense that the weakest are sacrificed for the survival of the fittest. From an economic point of view, it is expensive

and time consuming to look after the weak of society. From a personal point of view, it is simply very hard work.

So where does our compassion come from if it is not from the example of nature and does not come to us naturally? If we are all about progress and evolution, does this "Poison of Pity" not slow down our advance? A famous philosopher thought so: "Pity on the whole thwarts the law of evolution."

Our fascination with compassion is unique in world history. It comes from an understanding of the value of every person, not because of their usefulness, but because we have come to see the real worth of each individual. The famous quote from Dr Seuss children's book, *Horton Hears a Who* is, "A person's a person, no matter how small."

This idea is more than natural, it is truly, "super-natural." It is an alien concept because it comes to us from out of this world, above and beyond nature,

BY PASTOR DAVE

above and beyond our natural selfishness. The Bible tells the story of a supernatural being who appeared in this world as kindness itself, sacrificing Himself for the least, the last, and the lost. Jesus, the fittest of us all, give Himself for the weakest of us all. That turns nature upside down. The alien revolution of compassion traces itself back to this one event.

In our modern day that is looking increasingly more "red in tooth and claw," let us not brush aside the supernatural. We do not naturally have what we need, but there is one we remember at Christmas time who has all the supernatural we need and He invites us to "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

What's on at Lochee Baptist Chapel over the winter?

Carols around the Campfire

LOCHEE BAPTIST CHAPEL CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE | 13TH DEC, 5-6:30PM

Struggling this Christmas season?
Wondering about why we are here? What is the point? Is there more to life than this?
Working two jobs and still struggling?
Battling mental health? Pondering the big questions: Does Heaven exist? What happens when we die?

**Why not try church,
Sunday 10:30am
Lochee Baptist Chapel
12 Bright Street**