

MINISTER'S LETTER

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

As this is the first time that I put pen to paper, or more accurately, finger to keyboard for the Cumbernauld Old Newsletter, I thought that I should introduce myself.

I have come from the parishes of Echt and Midmar which are about thirteen miles west from Aberdeen. I moved to Aberdeen in 1999 with the intention of staying for a year, but in reality I was there for about eighteen years. My previous parishes were very rural in nature so being back in a town has taken some time to get used to, particularly the lack of tractors, sheep and barley!

I have now been in Cumbernauld for about four months and am settling in well. It's not just me though, the Manse is also inhabited by my son who is 12 years old, two dogs from Romania and at weekends, my husband David, who works at Aberdeen University and commutes to here on a Friday evening and returns on a Monday night.

I am very thankful for the wonderful welcome that has been extended to myself and my family since July and indeed before. I am slowly getting to know people and names (please forgive me if I momentarily have a lapse) and haven't got too lost thanks to my car's SatNav.

We have lots going on in the Church at Christmas and there is a list of all the special services for Christmas in our newsletter and website. May I commend to you the Christingle Service which is on Christmas Eve. This is a service aimed at the younger ones among us and everyone is very welcome. If you don't know what a Christingle Service is, it is explained clearly on a separate magazine article.

I was thinking about the short quote from Luke's Gospel at the beginning of this letter. How sad it is that in the 21st Century we cannot have peace on earth and good will toward men. Month by month we hear about new conflicts in places of the world that we had previously known only on maps. Now these countries are at the top of the news stories. It can feel that we can do nothing about the rise in conflict in the world. But we can, especially at Christmas, give to reputable charities and we can pray. We can pray for peace., for the end to loss of life through war and that the leaders of the world will strive for both justice and peace.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas,

Elspeth