



St Andrew's Church Brussels



Report to Presbytery, March 2019

The congregational life of St Andrew's Church of Scotland, Brussels has been busy over the past five months with the departure of the Gardner family and in planning for the future.

The Remembrance day service on November 11 commemorating the 100 years since the end of the First World War was particularly poignant for us as our church building was built in memory of all the Presbyterians who had died in Belgium during that conflict. We were honoured to have the Very Rev Russel Barr participate in our service on that occasion.

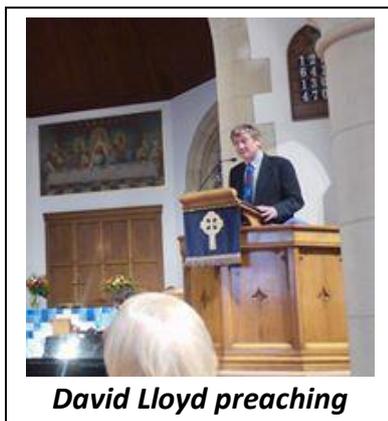
One of the high points of our Advent services was our Sunday School Nativity service which every year has a different twist. This year it used elements of time travel to put the message across, which was sure to please the minister. The other was our traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols which is always greatly appreciated by members and visitors.

The last Sunday of the year saw the church packed to capacity to bid farewell to the Gardner family at the end of their 14 years in Brussels. Speeches and presentations were made and the service was followed by a farewell cheese and wine fellowship.



Andrew's farewell

The following Sunday was the start of a new era without a minister. Our Interim Moderator, Rev Lance Stone, came down from Amsterdam to "preach us vacant". After the service he presided over a meeting of the congregation that elected a Nominating Committee with 13 members and then participated in the first meeting of the



David Lloyd preaching

new committee. The committee has been busy since and published the advert for a new minister in the March edition of Life and work and congregational profile (<https://churchofscotland.be/vacancy/profile2019.pdf>).

January saw the welcome return a Nancy Craig from Canada to help us during the first three months of our vacancy by providing pastoral support and help in Sunday worship. The vacancy has also stimulated some interesting changes with a range of different ministers including four of our elders offering to fill the pulpit on Sundays.

Our programme of outreach and support remains strong. Our main fund raiser is the Burns Supper which was held on Saturday 26 January and is always sold out. It supports the twinning project with Christ Presbyterian Congregation, Adentan, Accra, the Church Emergency Fund and the Ladybrand Hospice in South Africa. The migrant help team set up over two years ago coordinates St Andrew's work with migrants in a variety of ways such as the collection of clothes and foodstuff for distribution to refugee centres, the provision of financial support to local charities involved with migrants and in direct support to the Belgian Protestant Church “Maisons d’Espoir” project that helps migrants find housing and settle in Belgium.

Alec Grant
March 2019

