

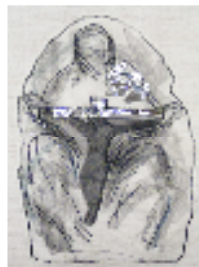
coloured stones – blue lapis lazuli, brown tiger’s eye, green aventurine and red porphyry. These are all naturally occurring gemstones, a reminder of the great riches that the created world offers to us. God created so much beauty, and diversity and bounty for us, yet so often we take it for granted, and fail to treat it with the respect or care that it deserves. There are many ways you can help look after the world and its peoples, including the way you shop, or holiday, and how you live. What could you do to help ?

The Child Jesus and Mary His Mother



As you move away from the front of the church, on the opposite side to the pulpit, is the font. This is topped by a statue of the child Jesus and his mother Mary. Jesus had a family, brothers and sisters, neighbours and friends, people who raised him, loved him, knew him and cared for him. When he started his ministry he had to leave them behind, and then they were not always supportive. Even though He was doing God’s will, his neighbours tried to throw him off a cliff. His brothers thought he was mad, and tried to stop him preaching. He was doing God’s will, but it wasn’t easy. We may not always get the support we would hope for in what we do. We may be doing what God wants us to do, and yet it may all seem to go horribly wrong – after all, Jesus was crucified, and even his closest friends couldn’t initially believe that could be part of God’s plan for Him. Sometimes we cannot understand what happens to us, because we do not know all God plans for us, and we may never fully understand. But that does not matter, our job is to trust God, to let him guide us, and to do the best we can. All the time, whatever happens, while trusting God to take care of everything !

Jesus Held by God



Beyond the font, on the far side of the church, is the Chapel of the Anam Chara (‘Soul Friend’). On the front of the table, the cloth has a depiction of God holding Jesus while he was on the cross, with the Holy Spirit shown as a silver dove. This chapel is set aside for quiet prayer and reflection. Why not spend some time here simply being held by God, or in reflection or prayer about something you have thought about as you have followed this tour of the church. Perhaps you might :

- Thank God for the people who built this place for his glory, for all those who have worshipped here through the centuries, and those who still worship here.
- Ask God to help you take as much care with the small details of daily life, as with the big things. Ask him to guide all you do, so that he can use you in his plans.
- Are you, or someone close to you, carrying a heavy burden, or in a difficult situation ? Ask God to be with you, (or them), and ask for His help and guidance.
- Thank God for any angels or people who help, support or encourage you, now or in the past.
- Ask God to make you open to being used by him as his messenger or angel to someone.
- Think about what you might do to help preserve and respect the created world and/or its peoples.
- Ask God to guide you in all you do, and to trust Him to see the ‘big picture’, even if you do not.
- Thank God for bringing you here today !

Welcome to St Cuthbert’s Church !

This leaflet will take you on a spiritual journey around the church, showing you some things that it tells us, or reminds us, about God and his love and care for you !



As you walk through the doors into the church, take a moment to look around you. There have been Christian places of worship here for over a thousand years - it is believed to be one of the oldest Christian sites in Scotland. Imagine the number of people who must have worshiped and sung and prayed in this place through the centuries. Think of the people who gave of the best they had to build and decorate this beautiful place for the glory of God – you are standing on Holy Ground !

Ruth, Naomi (and God)



To your left you will see a window depicting Ruth and Naomi. Naomi was Ruth’s mother-in-law. When both were widowed, Ruth left her country, family, friends, language and everything she knew, to travel with Naomi when she returned to her home town of Bethlehem. Even when Ruth eventually married again, it was to a man who would also take Naomi into his house and look after her. No visions or miracles here,

just the daily grind of making ends meet, and coping with the small details of everyday life, year after year after year. Ruth may not have seemed called by God to big or seemingly important things, but she always did the little things as well as she could. Although she and Naomi never knew it, the son Ruth had with her new husband, became the grandfather of David, one of Israel's favourite kings, and an ancestor of Jesus ! Ruth was faithful in the small things, and so God was able to use her as part of his salvation plan for the world ! Sometimes, the daily grind, the small details seem unimportant or insignificant, perhaps boring. Are they something God is not interested in, and does not care about ? No, he does care about you, and about everything that you do, every single day. What if God actually needs you to do even the small things in the best way you possibly can, because when you do, then he can weave them into his plans for the world ?

David and Goliath (and God)



Immediately above the Ruth and Naomi window, is one of a young David, before he became king. In the picture he is going out to face the giant Goliath, the champion of Israel's enemies the Philistines, to face him in single handed combat. David was a young shepherd boy not a military man. All he took to the fight was a small sling, a handful of stones, and his faith in God. No-one thought David could win, but he did – because he asked God to help him ! What battles do you face ? Are you feeling overwhelmed by what is against you ? Have you asked God for his help ? God is always ready to help us, if we just ask him. We may not always win our battles in ways that the world would recognise, but we will always be helped and

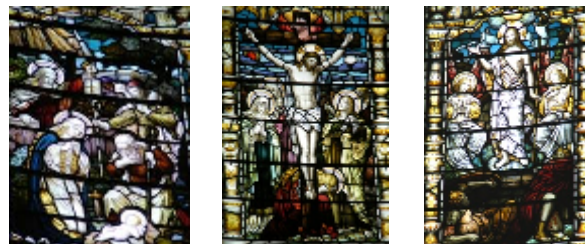
strengthened and supported. Whatever we face and whatever the outcome – God is right there with us. What could be better than that ?

God's Angels and Messengers



As you walk down towards the front of the church, notice the angels depicted on each side of the arch. Also on the front of the pulpit, and on the lectern (which depicts an angel carrying the bible behind her). Angels are God's messengers. In the bible, they usually bring good news or encouragement, sometimes both. Yet, in the bible they never appear with flapping wings, and often it's not clear whether they are the heavenly beings we think of as angels, or people who God is using as his messenger at that time. You may not think there are angels in your life, but are there people in your life that God uses to bring you words of encouragement, or hope, or comfort, just when you need it the most ? They are God's angels in disguise for you ! What about you, could you be an angel in disguise for someone ? Do you ever get the feeling that you ought to contact someone ? Could that be God wanting to use you as his messenger to them ?

The Life of Jesus



As you move on towards the front of the church, you will see above the communion table, three windows depicting the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, and above them a painted picture of Him in glory in heaven after his ascension. Below them is a carving of the Last Supper – the origin of Holy Communion. After that meal, Jesus was betrayed and abandoned by his friends, arrested, and crucified. When Jesus came to tell the world about God's love for them, He didn't just appear on earth, he was born, lived and died as someone just like each one of us. He didn't have an easy or soft life – born in a stable, his father a poor carpenter. During his ministry he had no home, no roof over his head. He died one of the cruelest deaths imaginable. Why would God go through all that ? Because he loves you ! Are you having a difficult time – Jesus has been there before you, he knows how it feels. Have you been betrayed or abandoned by someone you love ? Him too – he knows how that feels. No home, no job – Him too, he knows how that feels. When life is hard, our God is not someone who watches from a distance, he understands, because he has lived it before, and he is with you, going through it with you now. Never think that he cannot understand how you feel, or what you are going through - he does, he's been there, and like Him, we will get through it with God's help. Jesus did ! When He was resurrected by God, He overcame death, and God forgave our sins, and there is a place for us in heaven – if we believe !

God's Created World



At the front of the church you will see the huge marble communion table. Set in the front are large panels of