www.holytrinitystirling.org

# Holy Trinity Church

Albert Place, Stirling, FK8 2RG

Issue 4
December 2023
January 2024

Scottish Charity: SC016471

## The Rector's Letter

Dear all,

During Advent & Christmas we typically focus on the promise and birth of new light. During Advent we hear texts such as, 'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.' (Isaiah 60.1), while at Christmas we hear about the manifestation of Christ as the light, in the Gospel we read at Midnight Mass: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.' (John 1.5)

Since having moved to Scotland I have found those passages even more profound given how dark it is here at this time of the year, the promise of new light being so much more powerful when everything around lies in darkness.

Although the light symbolism is very important for me in my own prayer and spiritual pondering, I am very much aware that we should not vilify darkness at the expense of seeking light. There is darkness and there is darkness, we could say! Light can be blinding just as darkness can be a wholesome experience of rest and important for the sharpening of senses other than seeing.

This is why I've chosen Barbara Brown Taylor's book *Learning to Walk in the Dark* for us to read this winter at HT and to discuss in our Advent Fellowship Groups: because the book leads us to a deeper understanding of different kinds of darkness and how the experience of walking in darkness can actually help us in our journey towards the light. As Barbara Brown Taylor observes about the spiritual teachings of St John of the Cross: there is the kind of darkness 'you would be wise to turn away from,' but then there is also a darkness which simply is 'obscure or difficult to see.' Just because we do not see clearly does not mean we have gone astray or that God is not present somehow.

We can trust that God holds us in darkness and light. Perhaps these verses from the Psalms could be our spiritual motto this Advent and Christmas:

If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you. (Psalm 139.11-12)

Yours in Christ,

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## Advent Study Groups 2023

This year we are discussing Barbara Brown Taylor's book **Learning to Walk in the Dark**. Two groups are meeting for three weeks in December: Wednesday mornings at 10.30 a.m. (6th, 13th & 20th December) and Thursday evenings at 8 p.m. (7th, 14th & 21st December). Copies of the book can be picked up at church: donations to HT are appreciated.

## Congregation supports Christian Aid

The Christian Aid Coffee Morning held in the Park Church Hall on Saturday 21 October was well supported by our congregation. Ticket sales in Holy Trinity amounted to £50, with a further £50 coming from Sheila Brown's costume jewellery stall at the Coffee Morning. This helped to raise the magnificent sum of £834 for Christian Aid. Thanks to all who bought tickets or who came along on the day.

## HT Prayer Tree

**As well as the beautiful Christmas trees we enjoy looking at during the festive period, we continue to keep our Prayer Tree in church as it provides an opportunity for reflection and a means of showing our care and concern for people who are struggling and suffering at this time.**

## A New Look for Start Up Stirling (just don't call it a foodbank!)

Start Up Stirling, the local charity supported by Holy Trinity since its inception in 1994, is changing the way it operates. We will still be providing a much-needed helping hand to some of the most vulnerable in and around Stirling, but from next month the way we do it will be different. For a start, the eight foodbanks we operate will now be known as 'community hubs'. In part this is to reduce the stigma associated with foodbanks but it is also about flagging up the other forms of support we offer, because as well as providing food we also offer the support of trained volunteers and access to services such as Citizens Advice Bureau and other organisations. And we provide 'starter packs' - kitchen items, crockery, towels, cleaning products etc - to those starting new tenancies following a personal crisis.

Community hubs will operate differently too. At the moment each client receives a standard box of groceries and a bag of fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition, they may also choose from a variety of extras which normally includes frozen or chilled food, eggs and bread but also some of the more esoteric items donated from the public such as sauerkraut and banana blossoms! In future, we will be setting out the foodbank more like a shop. Clients will come in and, over a cup of tea or coffee with a volunteer, will select which items they want from a checklist. They will then go to the 'shop' to collect their items. We are hoping these changes will offer greater choice to our clients and at the same time reduce waste by ensuring that people are getting what they would actually find useful – very necessary at a time when our overall donations are down yet demand is up. (And as Christmas is just around the corner we really need your donations!).

We are also on the look out for volunteers to work in the warehouse and at the community hubs. If you are interested more information is available at:

https://startupstirling.org.uk/

Thank you for your continued support! Your donations provide a lifeline for many in need across the city and beyond. ***Cate Watson***

# Holy Trinity Finances

## Giving/Donating at Holy Trinity

Since services resumed after Covid, no collection is taken during the main Sunday service.

Did you know that

- **Offerings can be given** before and after the service in the baskets, and also by debit or credit card, beside where the service sheets are given out.
- **Offering**s can be made by **Weekly Envelope or Regular Bank Payments.** Regular contributions sustain our Ministry and other running costs.
- This **Advent,** the Social Time donations are being shared with **Shelter Scotland** helping homeless people, so please add an extra 'cuppa' for them. If you can't stay, why not give a 'cuppa' anyway! (Food etc items are still being collected for Start Up Stirling.)
- There is a jug marked **Flowers** at the back of the church; please drop **cash or cheque contributions** in to help with their costs.
- The gardening team seeks contributions for buying **matting and gravel** to keep the weeds down beside the church (see the article in the November magazine).

As fewer people carry spare change and more use *bank card*s, we can arrange to take contributions for any of the above in that way. Please seek me out to help - ask a sidesperson or one of the clergy team.

## Holy Trinity Finances

**Conservation Repairs for Holy Trinity**

In 2019, there was an Appeal to help fund Conservation Repairs, following several dry rot outbreaks. Renewing failed lime mortar and repairs and painting of the guttering and downspouts are needed to help prevent such problems.

The work and architect's oversight will cost £150,000, and start in the middle of next year if the money can be raised.

The 2019 appeal raised £22,600 and the Benefact Trust (partner with Ecclesiastical Insurance, our insurers) has given a grant. We are working to confirm a grant from Historic Environment Scotland and making applications to other Trusts. Generally they have more applications than funds available so it is uncertain how much this will raise.

The Vestry has agreed that the **Appeal** should be **resumed** and letters are being sent to everyone about this. Your help would be much appreciated.

Many thanks

Robert Nellist - Treasurer

## Support Holy Trinity

Don't forget one easy way to support Holy Trinity - sign up for FREE on #easyfundraising, and raise donations whenever you shop online with over 7,000 brands including John Lewis & Partners, Argos, M&S, Supermarkets and more. Plus, once you've raised your first £5, easyfundraising will double it!. Sign up through this QR Code or https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/search/cause/?q=holy%20trinity%20stirling&cat=cause

## Young Adults' Group

The Young Adults Group partnership between St Saviour's, St Mary's Dunblane and Holy Trinity Stirling, has been growing over the last few months.

We started back at the start of September 2023, after a break over the summer holidays and we have seen new members from the three churches coming along and we now have a core group of young adults from our charges, who have come together as one group. We have also been working on publicity to raise awareness of the group at the Stirling University Chaplaincy, and on various social and print media.

Over the last few months, we have had several social evenings, potluck supper, board and card games nights. However, we have also had some more serious but equally fun sessions. Some of the highlights have included; An introductions to liturgies, looking at a number of different Scottish Episcopal Church published liturgies, an Introduction to Chinese philosophy, and the origins of fixed hour prayer. Our thanks also go to Cathy Johnston, who came along as a guest speaker and shared the SEC Net Zero Toolkit and plans with us.

Over the coming months, we look forward to expanding the group further and hopefully bring more into the fold. The leadership team are also changing and expanded this term. We welcomed Rev Rachel Wright from St Mary's Dunblane in September and Bartholow to the Leadership team, in October. We are also saying farewell and thank you Rev Joan Lyon who is stepping back from being involved in the group, with the Rev Aaron Moffat -Jackman joining the charge of St Saviour's as Rector. On behalf of the leadership team and the group members, thank you Joan for all your dedication and support getting the group to where it is today. We are also very grateful for the support of Holy Trinity Vestry for their support with this missional venture.

## Young Adults' Group

What's next for the group?

The Leadership team will be meeting in December to plan for the next term starting in January. One of the many things we will be doing will involve some of the group reading the book 'Being Disciples' by Rowan Williams. This is in part to support one of our group members being confirmed in the spring and this study group will form part of the getting ready for confirmation.

If anyone is interested in joining or helping us out with the weekly meetings. Please get in touch with us by emailing youngadultsgroup021@gmail.com.

*Jamie Gardner*

Diocesan Children & Youth Officer and Young Adults Group Leader

## Big Ben

parishpump.org.uk

Do you stay up until midnight on New Year's Eve? If so, this year will be special – it is 100 years ago, on 31st December 1923, that the BBC first broadcast the chimes of Big Ben to welcome in the New Year.

For it was not until 31st December 1923 that the chimes of Big Ben were ever heard outside of Parliament and Westminster. But then the BBC got permission to broadcast them to the nation, and history was made.

The Big Ben daily time signal on the BBC is still cherished today, and Big Ben rings live for important events such as Remembrance Day and New Year, when the BBC sends the sound right around the world.

https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/anniversaries/december/big-ben-new-year/

## How do we hear God?

Since "discovering" the Anglican Communion in 1974, I have been praying these words together with people throughout the world from one of the prayers at the end of our communion service ……"*we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name."*

Somebody asked me – did I never get bored saying the same words week after week? Boredom had never even occurred to me as I thought about this question. At certain times, different phrases leap out at us as we say these familiar words and we begin to understand the power of liturgy as a way through which God is communicating with us at a deep level.

As we worship together Sunday by Sunday, take time to allow whatever words arise for you and take them with you into the coming week. What jumps out for you? Answers to our magazine editor, Libby Coats (lib.coats@gmail.com).

*Revd Joan Lyon*

## Regifting stall in January 2024

We all look forward to getting our Christmas gifts, and sometimes we end up with duplicates, or more gifts than we need. So how about participating in a "Regifting" stall at HT? All proceeds to HT funds.

Keep an eye on the newsletter and pew sheet for further details.

**Some simple 'tips' for making a 'greener' Christmas from HT's Flourishing Future group.**

- Use recycled, or recyclable paper - or decorate your own wrapping paper - and recycle the paper afterwards...
- Avoid sticky tape - use string or paper tape.
- Gift an 'experience', rather than an object - it could be as simple as accompanying someone on a walk/visit to a museum - or a gift of a membership to something like RSPB/Woodlands Trust etc.
- Make a donation on someone's behalf e.g. to Start Up Stirling or TreeLink (or even HT!) or other charities.
- Creative gifts - buy handmade crafts/upcycled items/ clothes or make sweets/treats to give away.
- Make Christmas decorations (these could be edible ones too) as gifts.
- Get creative with leftover food - share your recipes with others.
- Why not send a Christmas email rather than cards and donate the cost of postage to a charity?

## Getting to Know...

**Tell us something about your family background and childhood. e.g. Where did you grow up? Did you have siblings?**

I grew up in Essex, being born in Chelmsford and then moving to Colchester when I was 6. My Mum is also from Essex, and my Dad is a New Zealander. My Dad's parents both come from Scotland, my Grandma from Inverary and my Grandad is from Ness on Lewis. I have an elder sister, Amanda, she lives in Edinburgh. The question I get asked the most: where is your name from? My Dad has a cousin called Cameron, his wife is called CAtherine MAry YOlanda. It's her nickname and my real name!

I moved to Scotland when I was 30, in search of a better life away from London. I've now been here 18 years, I've gained a husband and a daughter and have no intention of leaving!

**When did you come to Holy Trinity? What keeps you here?**

I came to Holy Trinity on placement with the Scottish Episcopal Institute, where I am a Lay Reader candidate. In our 3rd year we have to do a placement of 100 hours, and learn from you. I started in September and will be with you until Easter. I live in Falkirk, so not far away!

**To whom in your life would you like to say 'Thank you'?**

My husband, Andy. His support for me on this journey is amazing. He doesn't mind when I'm away on residentials or on lectures, or constantly reading or writing assignments. He doesn't even mind when I practice sermons on him. Andy is an atheist!

**What is the piece of music/song/hymn that speaks most deeply to you?**

My favourite hymn is "Let all mortal flesh keep silence" We speak of "thin places" on Earth like Iona. For me, this hymn is a thin place. I am immediately in God's presence. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord Most High!

Many thanks to Camayo for taking part in this interview. It's a great way of getting to know someone a bit better. Please contact any of the editorial team if you would like to participate in this article or indeed in any other way. My experience of editing this magazine has demonstrated loud and clear that articles submitted by HT congregation are truly valued by readers and enable us to share more of ourselves as a community. We continue to use an online resource Parishpump for extra material, particularly graphics but it takes second place to your material. Please keep it coming! *Libby Coats*

## Prayer Diary December 2023

Fri 01 Charles de Foucauld, Priest and Hermit, 1916, that our lives may speak of our faith

Sat 02 Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, 1637, that we value our Christian community

**Sun 03 1 Advent**

Mon 04 Clement of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 387, for all who work in education

Tue 05 For a just peace in the Ukraine

Wed 06 Nicholas of Myra, Bishop, 4th century, that we may give with joy

Thu 07 Ambrose of Milan, Bishop and Teacher of the Faith, 397, for the work of Start Up Stirling

Fri 08 The Conception of Mary, Mother of the Lord, that we seek lives of purity

Sat 09 For all in the Emergency Services

**Sun 10 2 Advent**

Mon 11 For peace in the Middle East

Tue 12 For SSAFA and its work

Wed 13 For our local Care and Nursing Homes

Thu 14 John of the Cross, Priest, Teacher of the Faith, 1591, that our words will be enlightened

Fri 15 For the work of the Church Army

Sat 16 For all experiencing financial difficulties this season

**Sun 17 3 Advent**

Mon 18 For families, near and far, for healing and reconciliation

Tue 19 For all touched by darkness at this time of year; may they find light

Wed 20 For Stirling Street Pastors

Thu 21 For Christians in Pakistan and India

Fri 22 For all who are travelling over this season

Sat 23 For all struggling with addiction

**Sun 24 4 Advent**

Mon 25 Christmas Day

Tue 26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, for all touched by recent bereavement

Wed 27 John, Apostle and Evangelist, that we show love in our lives

Thu 28 The Holy Innocents, for children who are in danger or frightened in our world

Fri 29 Thomas of Canterbury, Archbishop and Martyr, 1170, that we speak truth to power

Sat 30 Josephine Butler, 1905, for women and girls whose lives are not as they wish

**Sun 31 Christmas 1**

**Please pray for everyone involved with COP28 taking place in Dubai 30th November -12 December 2023**

## Prayer Diary January 2024

Mon 1 Naming of Jesus, that we are washed in the Blood of Christ

Tue 2 Seraphim of Sarov, 1833, for a healing of our world

Wed 3 For all returning to work today

Thu 4 For all who work in retail and customer service

Fri 5 For the members of our armed forces

Sat 6 For farmers, foresters and fishermen

**Sun 7 The Epiphany of the Lord**

Mon 8 For all who volunteer with our youth organisations

Tue 9 For a just peace in the Ukraine

Wed 10 William Laud, Bishop, 1645, for the Scottish Episcopal Institute

Thu 11 David, King of Scots, 1153, that we strive for peace

Fri 12 For Stirling Street Pastors and all security door staff in Stirling

Sat 13 Kentigern (or Mungo), Bishop, c603, that we seek to make Scotland a beautiful green place

**Sun 14 Epiphany 2**

Mon 15 For all who feel disheartened by the darkness

Tue 16 For our Emergency Services

Wed 17 Anthony of Egypt, Abbot, 356, for the work of Startup Stirling

Thu 18 The Confession of Peter, that we acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Saviour

Fri 19 For our Fabric Convenor Ian Boa

Sat 20 For all College and University Students

# Prayer Diary January 2024

**Sun 21 Epiphany 3**

Mon 22 For HTTOTS

Tue 23 For our mission at Holy Trinity

Wed 24 Francis de Sales, Bishop, 1622, that we practice kindness

Thu 25 The Conversion of Paul, Apostle, that we have a vision of our mission

Fri 26 Timothy and Titus, Bishops, that we see the breadth of God's mercy

Sat 27 John Chrysostom, Bishop and Teacher of the Faith, 407, that we may prophesy

**Sun 28 Epiphany 4**

Mon 29 For our schools and all who work in them

Tue 30 Charles 1, King, 1649, for our governments in Holyrood and Westminster

Wed 31 Charles Mackenzie, Bishop, Missionary, Martyr, 1862, that all may have access to clean water

## Readings December 2023

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Saturday 2nd** | **7.30pm** | Advent Vigil |
| **Sunday 3rd** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **ADVENT 1** | **Readings** | Isaiah 64.1-9; 1 Corinthians 1.3-9; Mark 13.24-37 |
| **Thursday 7th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 10th** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **ADVENT 2** | **Readings** | Isaiah 40.1-11; 2 Peter 3.8-15*a*; Mark 1.1-8 |
| **Thursday 14th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 17th** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **ADVENT 3** | **Readings** | Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11; 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24; John 1.6-8, 19-28 |
| **Thursday 21st** | **11am** | Holy Communion |

## Readings December 2023

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Sunday 24th** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **ADVENT 4** | **Readings** | 2 Samuel 7.1-11, 16; Romans 16.25-end; |
| **CHRISTMAS EVE** | | Luke 1.26-38 |
| | **11.00 p.m.** | Midnight Mass |
| | **Readings** | Isaiah 52.7-10; Hebrews 1.1-4; John 1.1-14 |
| **Monday 25th** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **CHRISTMAS DAY** | **Readings** | Isaiah 62.6-12; Titus 3.4-7 |
| | | Luke 2.1-20 |
| **Thursday 28th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 31st** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **CHRISTMAS 1** | **Readings** | Isaiah 61.10-62.3; Galatians 4.4-7; |
| | | Luke 2.22-40 |

## Readings January 2024

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Thursday 4th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 7th** | **10.30am** | All Age Eucharist |
| **EPIPHANY** | **Readings** | Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; |
| | | Matthew 2.1-12 |
| | **6.30pm** | Epiphany Carol Service |
| **Thursday 11th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 14th** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **BAPTISM OF CHRIST** | **Readings** | Genesis 1.1-5; Acts 19.1-7; |
| | | Mark 1.4-11 |
| **Thursday 18th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **Sunday 21st** | **10.30am** | Sung Eucharist |
| **EPIPHANY 3** | **Readings** | Jonah 3.1-5,10; 1 Corinthians 7.29-31; |
| | | Mark 1.14-20 |
| **Thursday 25th** | **11am** | Holy Communion |
| **CONVERSION OF PAUL** | | |

## Our Services

**Sundays**

**10.30am Sung Eucharist**

**Thursdays**
**11.00am Holy Communion**

**At present Sunday School (HTKidZ) meets according to demand. Contact Gen Pont for further information: gandapont@yahoo.co.uk**

**HT Youth Fellowship meets monthly on Saturday evenings. Contact Sarah and Alistair Shaw for information: shaws1@talktalk.net**

**Sunday 28th** **10.30am**

Sara preferred to let people work out the hymns for themselves

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## Rotas December 2023

| | Readings | Intercessions |
|---|---|---|
| **2nd December** | *Advent Vigil* | |
| **3rd December** | **B Wheeler** | **A Pont** |
| **10th December** | **A Tyler** | **A Shaw** |
| **17th December** | **C Johnston** | **M Kenyon** |
| **24th December** | **R Campbell** | **C Watson** |
| **24th** *Midnight Mass* | **S Shaw** | |
| **25th December** | **T Mitchell** | **D Brown** |
| **31st December** | **J Morris** | **R Nellist** |

## Sidesduty

**2nd December J & N Morris**

**3rd December H Kemp & C Kendall**

**10th December B & C Watson**

**17th December L Coats & F MacLeod**

**24th December J Foster & H Kemp**

**24th December Midnight A Lees and Volunteer**

**25th December J & N Morris**

**31st December L Coats & F MacLeod**

## Rotas January 2024

| | Readings | Intercessions |
|---|---|---|
| **7th January** | **C Watson** | **C Hyde** |
| **7th January** | *Epiphany Carol Service* | |
| **14th January** | **D Brown** | **N Morris** |
| **21st January** | **L Green** | **T Mitchell** |
| **28th January** | **S Stirling Aird** | **I Boa** |

## Sidesduty

**7th January H Kemp & R Campbell**

**7th January** *Carol Service* **C Kendall & Volunteer**

**14th January B & C Watson**

**21st January L Coats & J Foster**

**28th January F MacLeod & A Lees**

**Wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year**

Articles for the February edition are requested on or before

**January 14th**

The magazine will be available on

**January 28th**

## The Christmas Turkey

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me

I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard

As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.

On the third day of Christmas people came from just next door,

The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.

On the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old

We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.

On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,

But we were nice and warm inside, and had the turkey curried.

On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died.

The children fought and bickered – we had the turkey rissoles fried.

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince

When he sat down at table - and was offered turkey mince.

On the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,

For he'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of alka-seltzer.

On the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime dad was blotto,

He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.

On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,

Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of Christmas our lovely tree was moulting,

And with chilli, soy and oyster sauce, the turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles back on our lips,

The guests had gone, the turkey too – WE DINED ON FISH AND CHIPS.

**PAPERSORTERS**

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## Organisations Meeting in the Church Hall

**Mondays**

**10-12noon HTTots Gen Pont: gandapont@yahoo.co.uk**

**4.00-5.30pm Destination Judo: info@destinationjudo.com**

**6.15-7.45pm Mindbodysoul Yoga: grant@mindbodysoulyoga.co.uk**

**Tuesdays**

**10-12noon Pilates: judithgraham090@gmail.com**

**6.30-8pm Lishi Self Defence: damien@lishi.org**

**Wednesdays**

**9.15-10.15 Pilates Mini Ball Class: Jackie.govan@live.com**

**11.30-3pm Tea Dance (last Wednesday in the month): stirling4community@gmail.com**

**5-7pm Dance: francescahamill@icloud.com**

**7-9pm SABOS: sabosmusicaltheatre@gmail.com**

**Thursdays**

**11-2pm Stirling Community Lunch: stirling4community@gmail.com**

**4-7pm Dance: kimmybruce@hotmail.com**

**7pm Stirling4 Community Choir**

**Fridays**

**10-12 noon Art Group: stirling4community@gmail.com**

**2-5pm University of the Third Age (monthly): membership@fvu3a.org.uk**

**Saturdays**

**9-10am Babyballet: lpattison@hotmail.co.uk**

**The church hall is available for further lettings. If you would like to rent the hall please contact Sarah Shaw on 07970466551 or shaws1@talktalk.net**