

December 2021

The Parishioner

The magazine of the Portland Parish Church of Scotland: Troon
(Charity Number SC003477)



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

With God's support we are developing Portland as a dynamic, Spirit-led Church impacting on our town and beyond through encouragement, nurture and service

Advent – the word comes from the Latin ‘ad’ meaning ‘to’ and ‘venire’ meaning ‘come.’

Adventus a derivation of *advenire* is also Latin – meaning ‘to arrive.’

The season of Advent means then that we are preparing for arrival.

When you travel on an aeroplane and the captain comes on to prepare for arrival you can expect an assortment of things: cabin personnel to collect rubbish; you will be asked to put your tray tables in an upright and locked position; you will be asked to move your seats forward; and lastly you will be asked to fasten your seat belt. Those are all things you do to prepare to arrive.



I am sure we all have our lists of things to do to prepare for the arrival of Christmas: Get tree, set up tree, purchase gifts, prepare food, clean the house. . . the list could get very long.

But, how do you prepare for God’s in-breaking into the world? How do you know that God entering into humanity in the form of a helpless baby will change life? How do you prepare for such an event?

I don’t know that you ever can. Breaking into the world in weakness and vulnerability of a baby is not what we expect. Defying death, even death on a cross again shows vulnerability and societal weakness. But these two vulnerable acts are just the cusp of what God’s message in Christ is about. Christ’s message of love, justice, peace, mercy, and grace is more transformative than we can begin to imagine. Arriving in the world under threat and escaping tyranny and injustice lays the foundation for God’s transformative work through God’s tremendous love. I don’t know how you prepare for it, but I do hope you will join me and our Portland family to arrive.

See you this Advent.

In Christ’s Love-
Rev. Mary Elizabeth Prentice-Hyers

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 05 December | Second Sunday of Advent, Communion |
| 12 December | Third Sunday of Advent, Show up on the day Congregational Nativity |
| 19 December | Lessons and Carols |
| 24 December | Candlelight Service 6.30 pm at Old Parish |
| 24 December | Watchnight Service (11 p.m. Hospitality, 11:30 p.m. Worship) Portland |
| 25 December | Joint Christmas Day Service at Troon Old Parish Church, 10:30 a.m. |
| 26 December | Troon Churches Together present a joint worship service ONLINE ONLY |

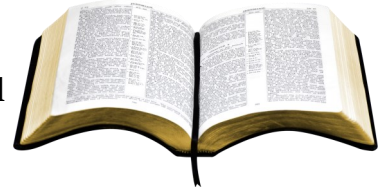
HOUSE GROUP

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light..... Unto us a child is born Isaiah 9.2/6

How often have we all read a well known verse and drawn comfort from it?

BUT..... how often have we really looked at such verses and thought about them?

At Housegroup in November we thought about Light and Dark. We read several passages and looked at ourselves - were we light? If so what kind /colour of light? And is darkness always bad? The Bible uses metaphor in so many ways . Often to dig deep into the meanings takes time and energy. Christmas is coming , with all its gaiety and light . Shepherds, Magi, a baby, a manger. Before then, Advent will soon be here.



Advent , from the Latin, means a coming, an approach, in some translations a visitor . And it can mean all sorts of things to all of us - light yes. But also gladness, fun, food and drink, and sometimes a measure of darkness, loss, unhappiness too.

Given support, companionship, friends and faith we can cope with all of the dark as well as the light. We can sit quietly and meditate ; we can join in the well known carols and rejoice.

We can move forward - this was the lovely prayer with which we finished our session together:

Jesus, light of the world, shine into our hearts and expose what is really there. Where there is sadness and gloom, may your light shine joyfully. Where there are shadows of pretence and hypocrisy, may the radiance of your truth chase them away. May your light so illumine our hearts and minds that our lives may shine forth like lanterns of hope, and beacons of the gospel of truth. This we ask in your holy name; Amen

Next meeting: **Wednesday 8th December at 7.30pm , 33 Beach Rd**

There will be mince pies.....- all are welcome, just come.

Barbie Short

TROON FOOD BANK—VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

The Troon Food Bank has remained open throughout the pandemic although it was reduced to one day a week from the previous two days.

We are now returning to two days—Tuesday and Friday from 12 noon to 2 pm in Troon Parish Church Halls, and there are vacancies for volunteers on Tuesdays for two hours once a month to work as a group of four people.

If you are interested or require information, please contact Joy Allan (315643) or Carol Clark (316437).

CHRISTMAS GIFT AND NATIVITY SERVICE

The Christmas Gift and Nativity service will take place on Sunday, December 12th, and once again Portland will be supporting CHAS along with Neonatal units.



One thing that has been asked for this year is gift vouchers – these can be for any amount and from supermarkets, toys shops like Smyths or Argos. These will be given to families to help buy ingredients for Christmas meals, or to choose some toiletries that they know are suitable for their children to use. Many of the youngsters supported by CHAS are not always able to use many types of toys and games and by giving vouchers this can enable the staff and parents to get something that is appropriate for the individual youngster.

We would also like to support the staff working in neonatal units in hospitals. Self-care items for the nurses such as hand creams, lip balms etc are always very much appreciated, especially now that they are wearing PPE during their shifts. Another thing that is always welcomed by the teams in these wards are photo frames to share precious photos with the families they are supporting.

They appreciate your support.

PORTLAND WEBSITE AND MAILING LIST

Websites are stored (hosted) on remote computers which are permanently connected to the Internet so that they are always available. The Portland website was recently moved to a new host computer. This has two immediate benefits.

When you access the website you should now see that the address is <https://www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk>. https:// means that all traffic flowing to and from the site is encrypted or "secure". This might reassure some people although, since no personal data is ever involved, the fact that the previous site was "not secure" was never a problem.

The new website host provides the ability to have a more functional mailing list. At the moment the church mailing list is stored on a personal computer and is only accessible from that. The list has now been copied to the new website host and is being tested by sending church notes twice - once from the old system which is known to work and one from the new system. If you are not getting two mailings, you should check your spam folder. If you are getting two emails then you do not need to do anything. The old system will not be used from the beginning of January.

John McDonald

BLYTHSWOOD CARE SHOE BOX APPEAL

Despite the short notice and the difficulties of the times, Portland came up trumps! So thank you for all the generous donations of some filled boxes, along with items of clothing, toys and personal items which would go a long way to fill more boxes and bags. £140 in cash was also donated which will go towards transporting the Christmas boxes to their destinations.

I felt they were particularly pleased to receive the bag of knitted hats, so if you are a knitter and have some time over the coming year I have given below a knitting pattern for a hat from the Blythswood Care website. If you are interested there are other useful patterns on this site for hats, scarves and mittens which are also much in demand.

So once again thank you for this outreach mission support which we are so blessed to be able to give.

Margaret Short

KNITTED HAT

Size 5mm needles. Double knitting wool.

Cast on 70, 80 or 90 stitches.

k2, p2 rib for 7-8 inches depending on size

To shape top:

Row 1 – (k8, k2 tog) to end

Row 2 – alternate even rows - purl

Row 3 – (k7, k2 tog) to end

Row 4 – (k6, k2 tog) to end

Continue decreasing this way until you knit 2 tog all way across.

Pull wool through stitches and fasten off. Make a bobble and attach if you want.



Mary Fisher Muir Woodburn (nee Paterson)

Born in Darvel 6th January 1931 to William and Mary Paterson, the second child with an older brother Tom. She attended Darvel Lower Grade School and later Kilmarnock Academy.



Mary moved on to 'Dough School' in Glasgow where she qualified in Home Economics; learning the art of home making, sewing, knitting and cookery. Her first post in teaching was at Cumnock Academy.

Mary married John Woodburn, also from Darvel, in 1957 and moved from Irvine Valley to Sunderland. John was the editor of Sunderland Echo newspaper. In 1959 a son, Tom, arrived. Then in 1960 they headed back north of the border to Campbeltown where a daughter, Mary, arrived in October 1962.

Come 1966 it was time to move again to Ayr, much handier for visiting the now ageing grandparents in Darvel. Poor Mary had to push "wee" Mary in her pram from Hillfort Road, all the way up Masonhill to Crofthead Road at the very top.

A car accident on the way home from holiday in the late sixties (before seatbelts) started Mary's neck problems which led to many, many headaches in later life.

In 1970 the final move to Troon was made, where Mary re-started her teaching career at Barassie Primary School two mornings a week, later to become three full days even teaching cooking to P7s.

On arrival in Troon the family soon settled to worship in Portland Church under the ministry of Rev. J. G. Grant. Mary was a regular attender of the Women's Guild and for a short time acted as Treasurer.

On retiral from teaching, Mary used her needlecraft skills to knit soft toys for the Christmas boxes. Many a debate was had with the family; are the eyes in the right place? Nose too big? Or the position of the tail on some animals.

A serious fall down an escalator in April 2019 left son Tom taking the role of carer and gradually working less and less in his gardening business. Yet in spite of this and many other falls, Mary was still able to get out and about, albeit eventually in a wheelchair. Even on her final Sunday she was found in her place in Church.

Mary went into Ayr Hospital on Wednesday evening and died in her sleep on Friday, 12th November 2021.

Tom and Mary would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, phone calls and gifts and those who supported us at the Memorial Service.

Tom Woodburn

RECENT DEATHS

Mr. Ian Murray	South Beach	November 2021
Mrs Mary Woodburn	North Drive	12th November 2021



Ampleforth Abbey Orchard

This recipe for a delicious pudding comes from a book called “Cooking Apples” published in 1982 by the Benedictine Ampleforth Abbey which is situated in the North Yorks Moors. Their orchard was planted in the early 1990s. Recipes for the book were provided by “Friends of the Abbey”. In non Covid times it is possible to visit the orchard, nearest town is Thirsk. Some of you may have been lucky enough to have seen it when all the apple blossom was in bloom.

Apple and Almond Pudding

*1lb 8 ozs Cooking apples
2 ozs Soft brown sugar
4 ozs Butter
4 ozs Caster Sugar
4 ozs Ground almonds
2 eggs*

Peel, core and slice the apples and cook them gently with the brown sugar and a tablespoon of water until they are quite soft. Put the cooked apple in a buttered dish at least 2 inches deep.

Cream butter and caster sugar. Beat in the eggs one at a time, and finally fold in the ground almonds. Cover the apples with this mixture, spreading it evenly, and bake at Mark4/180 degrees C for about 40 minutes. The top should be golden brown. Best served warm, after it has been out of the oven for about half an hour.

Joy Taylor

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church held its first in-person event during the Troon Wintertainment day on 21 November. It was lovely to see families come through the door to take part in the crafts, have juice and biscuits and listen to the Christmas message presented in a puppet show. During the two hours, more than 80 families visited and more than 100 children went home with their family bag containing a book with the Christmas Story and the craft items they had made, all on the Christmas theme of Joy.



As always, the Messy Church craft team produced an impressive selection of items to make, like cards, crowns, table mats, tree decorations. Since there were so many other events in the town, we had thought some people might drop in, do a few crafts then go, but the lure of getting a full card stamped with all items completed kept many engrossed till the end. The team still have to meet to decide on our strategy for the way forward and we welcome suggestions and support.

It is hard, to the point of impossible, to quantify the effectiveness of any event like this. We have to remember that first and foremost it is CHURCH, albeit in a different format to traditional services. So much of Christmas has been taken over by commerce and the Christian message can become buried at the bottom of the shopping bag, if it is there at all. This is why the Messy Church presence at Wintertainment is so important.

Raymond Howes

With Raymond's death the Messy Church team lost an invaluable helper and supporter. Raymond was not only happy to come when it was Portland's turn to host, but he responded to the call for people to come along to all events and to help generally, just by welcoming and talking to the children and adults. Each Messy Church includes a time of worship and reflection on the chosen theme, originally led by the minister of whichever church is hosting. Raymond agreed to help with this, his skills honed by many years of presenting dramas at the summer Holiday Clubs many will remember run jointly by Portland and St Ninian's. As always, Raymond threw himself enthusiastically into the role to present the message in a memorable way, on one occasion, in full fisherman kit. He was someone who remained young at heart and fully committed to passing on his faith to the next generation.

Sandra McCallum



SHOEBOX APPEAL 2021

Well, it's all over once again and time to reflect on yet another remarkable year!

This year, an astonishing total of **6,484** shoeboxes of gifts and **£9,377** was donated. Once again these gifts are to be distributed in Moldova, Eastern Europe.



Sincere thanks to so many donors from all airts an' pairts (44 churches, 3 schools and many other individuals) from Arran and Cowal, to Darvel and Sorn, from Greenock to Maybole). Thanks to those who remembered us in prayer, the donors of completed boxes, as well as the donors of fillers, those who gave their time and energy to inspect the boxes, those who packed boxes into cartons, the drivers and "van boys" who collected boxes, those who counted the money and handled the banking.

Everything is mixed with mercy. It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Yes, Covid did help the Appeal. People self-isolating or kept at home had plenty of time to knit or crochet. Also inspectors of boxes, unable to huddle up together for a good blether as in non-Covid years, worked doubly hard.

We've been inundated with fillers, so much so that the Wednesday Packers will be kept busy for some considerable time packing all of the left-over goods into their various categories for despatch to the various Blythwood Care contacts in Scotland or abroad.

As always, the gifts and recipients were blessed in prayer. This year, Rev Jamie Milliken spent a considerable amount of time with us one morning, blessing the gifts and recipients. He then made contact with many if not all who were working in the halls that morning.

A huge thank you to everyone involved and to Fullarton ConneXions. Without this generous gift of exclusive use of Fullarton Hall and Schoolroom for all of three weeks, none of this Appeal could have taken place. Thanks too for the generous and willing loan of tables from the Gospel Hall and St Andrew's Church – and a special thanks to FAS Print for the splendid supply yet again this year of wee notepads which are so well suited for the shoebox gifts.

An important variation this year is to load 4,000 shoeboxes out of our 6,484 directly onto a trailer parked in the service road under the Irvine Rivergate Centre overpass in the last week of November. A team of able-bodied Blythwood Care men should make smart work of shuttling the selected 400 or so filled cartons currently stored in our warehouse in Montgomery Street to the Rivergate service road. The remaining space on the trailer will then be filled with cartons of clothes, bedding, shoes, and other items collected by the Wednesday Packers over recent months. That trailer is then to transit to Moldova via Stranraer/Larne to Eire then to Rotterdam and finally to Moldova.

This year is a significant year in the sense of handover as next year Thomas and Candace Turner will become the principal individuals to take over the tasks done by Fraser and Anna for the past several years. Come autumn next year, they will be looking for the same level of support from the Fullarton Family and also those other regular helpers and contributors throughout Ayrshire and beyond to help our brothers and sisters in Eastern Europe.

Finally, as we celebrate Christmas this year, let us remember the recipients of "our" shoeboxes and that they will find true Christian joy beyond the items in their box.

**OUR NEXT ISSUE OF THE
PARISHIONER WILL BE IN
FEBRUARY 2021 POSTED AT THE
BEGINNING OF THAT MONTH
PLEASE SEND ANY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUR
MAGAZINE TO —parishioner45@gmail.com**



Locum Minister: Rev. M. E. Prentice-Hyers

Interim Moderator: Bill Duncan

Session Clerk: John Reid

Treasurer: Catriona McKellar

Church Officer: Ruairidh McKellar

Church Office:

Organist/Music Convener:

Hall's Convener: Catriona McKellar

The Parishioner: Margaret Short

Website:

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