

July 2020

The Parishioner

The magazine of the Portland Parish Church of Scotland: Troon



***I am the Church! You are the Church!
We are the Church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world,
Yes, we're the Church together***

Hymn Number 204

***God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.***

Psalm 46 Verse 1

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**

July comes to mind as a month of celebrations. Two that are particularly relevant are 4th of July and 12th of July. Dave and I have hosted, on occasion, 'Colonial Rebellion Days.' These are gathering of local friends to celebrate/ mark/ note the country of our birth's rebellion against the country in which we currently live. 12th July can be a contentious celebration in Northern Ireland. It marks when King William of Orange defeated King James II in the Battle of the Boyne. Having experienced a 12th in Newtownards, Northern Ireland, and a 4th in the deep South of the USA, I recognize that these two national holidays, these celebrations, are deeply rooted in identity.



I can remember as a young person listening to Lee Greenwood's rendition of *Proud to be an American* blare loudly over a speaker as crowds watched fireworks explode in the Texas summer night's sky. I can also remember the crowds and bands of a 12th in Northern Ireland. There was something fun about mixing BBQ, fireworks, and national pride all together. I am sure that many of these celebrations this year will look quite different than previous years.

As my family grows ever closer to becoming UK citizens, the question of identity once again comes to mind. How do we identify ourselves?

Finlay, my six-year old often says he is 50% American and 50% Scottish since he was born here in Scotland. When we go back to the states, friends will comment that we sound Scottish, especially the boys. I will never sound truly Scottish. As soon as I open my mouth and speak people know that I am not from around here. I am an immigrant, and yet, I will soon hold dual citizenship.

Nationality aside, how do we identity ourselves?

First and foremost, we belong to God. No matter our creed, colour, or nationality, we belong to God. You may get tired of hearing me say this, but in and through the waters of creation and baptism, God names each one of us and claims us as God's own. Maybe if I say it enough we will begin to believe it.

How does that change who we are and how we live?

As the church continues its virtual worship, we will continue to **be** the church outside the building and **in** the community. A group of people is working to develop a plan from the 41-page document the Church of Scotland issued on how to re-open the church building. But the church never closed. The church is you/us. You/We are the hands, feet, eyes, legs, and heart of the church and if we know that we are all beloved children of God, whatever your age, we are still at work in the world. If we live into our identities as beloved children of God, the church will never close and its work in the world will never cease.

Thanks be to God.
Alleluia.
Amen.

Rev. Mary Elizabeth Prentice-Hyers

Message from the Session Clerk

Dear members and friends of Portland,

The COVID-19 crisis is uncertain and complex and our understanding of it is evolving. When the Scottish Government published their Route Map, they said that it will be updated as the evidence and information changes.

We are (as I write) in Phase 2 which states – “Places of worship can open for private prayer under physical distancing rules and hygiene safeguards”. It is important to remember that Phase 2 of the Scottish Government’s four-phase plan refers only to individual prayer and not to minister or worship leader led prayer. Portland’s Kirk Session is in the process of examining the guidelines issued by the Church of Scotland with a view to reopening the church buildings as soon as the Scottish Government moves to Phase 3 which states – “Places of worship can open to extended groups subject to physical distancing and hygiene safeguards”. We will only reopen the church buildings if we are convinced that it is safe to do so and there is a desire from the congregation to do so.

As we move into Phases 3 and 4, congregations will be able to use their church buildings more to support local mission and worship alongside the wider needs of the community. However, as there is legislation in place restricting the use of church buildings, it is the responsibility of the Scottish Government to provide a regulatory framework for when congregations can reopen their church buildings and for what purpose. The Scottish Government is expected to publish additional guidance on which activities will be permitted in church buildings during phase 3.

Ultimately it is the congregation as a body which must ensure that suitable steps are taken. Compliance is not solely the responsibility of the charity trustees (Kirk Session) of a congregation: safety for all will only be achieved if each individual member adheres to good practice. It is the responsibility of every congregation to ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements in place to comply with health and safety legislation. To that end, the Kirk Session has appointed a Covid-19 Committee to specifically examine the Health and Safety legislation and the guidance issued by the Church of Scotland. We will only consider reopening the church building if it is possible to comply with all aspects of health and safety. Meanwhile, we will work towards the day we are allowed to reopen the church buildings. We will continue to provide our Online Services and support each other as a Christian family.

Pray for our Interim Moderator, Bill Duncan and our Locum Minister, Rev Mary Elizabeth Prentice-Hyers. Pray for the isolated members of our community and help those you can. Keep your spirits high and as you stand and stare at God’s wonderful creation, think how blessed we are that God so loved the world that he gave his only son that we may have everlasting life.

May God’s peace be with You,

John Reid (Session Clerk)

Joshua Allan Philp was born on Tuesday 26th May in Crosshouse Hospital. He weighed in at a very healthy 8lbs 5 oz. Unfortunately shortly after birth his blood oxygen levels were a bit low and he was admitted to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit where after a few days of excellent care and attention he was returned to the ward and finally allowed home when he was just under a week old. During that time Jack and Susan could not see each other due to the Covid 19 restrictions and as you can tell a worrying time was made more stressful against that background. But as you can see from the pictures, he is a very healthy boy and the family are settling down to life together. One of the benefits of Covid 19 is that Jack is working from home and can see his son anytime he wants and is a wee bonus for Susan as it means he can take a turn and give her a well-deserved rest! Both sets of grandparents are desperate for a cuddle but it is not to be, so we are having to make do with window visits until the First Minister says otherwise. Hopefully not too much longer as his big cousin Harry is also desperate to meet him!

Colin and Evelyn Philp



Susan and Jack with Joshua on their 4th wedding anniversary at Brig-a-Doon where they were married

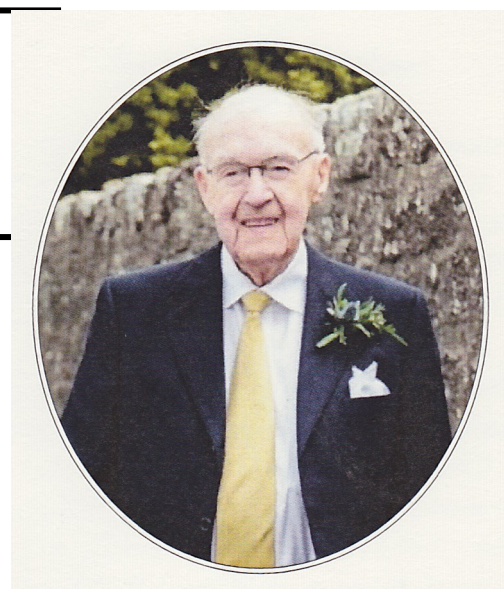


Joshua one week old

Dr A. George King MBChB

Born 11.11.16—Died 5.6.20

George lived a life with deep love for family, medicine, and career. Family and friends will remember George as a good storyteller, a firm father, a constant presence, and a devoted doctor.



WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR SAVIOUR?

I am sure you will all agree having faith has been our saviour during this difficult time – thank you Mel for reaching out to us on Sundays and for your pastoral care – but other things have come into play. For me it has been walking Lotte, my dog, over Darley in the peace and quiet of the early morning, enjoying the nature – the odd fox, the many rabbits, thrushes I haven't seen in a long time, and the passing of the seasons through the gorse, the broom and the myriad of wild flowers and grasses.

I think we are all in agreement that we are so lucky where we live with the beach and green spaces to walk 'socially distanced' but still able to smile, chat and say hello. I feel doubly blessed with having my garden – born of a family of keen gardeners, I am happy to fill my time in it. With time which in recent years has been taken up with other things, after several years absent, my greenhouse is full of tomato and courgette plants, all watched carefully for aphids, red spider mite, botrytis, over-watering, under-watering etc. etc. And early on in lockdown never mind the world pandemic, my main concern was where was I going to get bedding plants!

Major events pass almost unnoticed, weddings postponed, anniversaries shrugged off, holidays cancelled with a "there's always next year" but small achievements now give such pleasure and satisfaction – the arrival of a food delivery, the garden visit from a friend or family member. A small kindness. Little things mean a lot.

And I think the greatest gift and saviour oddly has been Time. I find myself taking on the oddest projects, asking myself why, and being satisfied with the answer 'because I can and I have the time'.

Margaret Short



Leisure

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this is if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

W. H. Davies

Pick and Mix

Or not? Woolworth's has long gone, but here we all are in a strange new universe of New Normal.

Yes, we are adjusting..... we go online for shopping and forget the fish fingers, we zoom our way to a family quiz or a work meeting.....who would have thought we would all get so Zoomy.....and we go dutifully for walkies or cycles or Zoom pilates.

So what about our faith? What about church?

What is our New Normal? We have dedicated and hard working ministers giving us a service and a sermon. But it's different isn't it? We no longer congregate together, exclaim at whatever weather we have :

Wow, I am getting blown in the door OR
Gosh isn't it a lovely day

We don't have little cosy huddles over coffee discussing our families or our holidays (Holidays Eh???) which are so valuable to our Sunday.

We go online. We sit comfortably with coffee listening to Mel. Or Jamie. Or Andy. Or Dave? Or Radio Scotland / Radio 4 . I could go on. We can Pick /Mix /choose. Goodness what choice. And do we mind whether this is the Roman Catholic church in Edinburgh which I heard this morning, or the Episcopalian church from Glasgow or St Paul's? The amazing differences all vanish in our need to listen to the word of God, and to think about how we are handling the New Normal. Should this be something we take with us to all our Tomorrows? We need not worry about the building, nor the way "we always do it' or the exact Bible or hymn book we use. We do need to feel like a community who worship together and we hope we will soon be again.

This may be the One Good Thing we take with us as we emerge, masked and worried, into the Future. God is with us, supporting us all, and we will once more, put aside all differences and become a Christian community with a great deal to give to those around us.

Halleluia

Barbie Short

**DEADLINE FOR THE AUGUST ISSUE OF THE PARISHIONER—
SUNDAY, 26TH JULY
FOR POSTING ON WEBSITE ON SUNDAY, 2ND AUGUST**

**PLEASE THINK OF CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR MAGAZINE—
parishioner45@gmail.com**

St. Patrick > Quotes > Quotable Quote



“Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,

Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.”

— Saint Patrick

DUST IF YOU MUST

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter,
Bake a cake or plant a seed,
Ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,
Music to hear and books to read,
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but world's out there,
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain.
This day will not come around again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,
Old age will come and it's not kind.
And when you go –and go you must -
You, yourself, will make more dust.



IN GOOD HANDS

As you will see from the photograph on the front page (thank you Avril), Portland is being well cared for in our absence, and Ian McManus has once again filled the border and pots with bedding plants showing everybody our Church is being well looked after. And I know our Property Committee is working hard behind the scenes to ensure the Church is in good order for our eventual safe return. Thank you all.

I recently paid a garden visit to Ian and Rae and I now share some photos I took of their own garden, which is a gardener's treasure trove!

Margaret



Weeping copper beech



Two of these to greet you at the front door





Family game—spot the dog!



Update from Malawi on their Covid-19 response

Last month's Parishioner included details from our partner congregation of their need for additional funding to support their efforts to combat the spread of Covid-19 in their rural community. Being one of the world's poorest countries Malawi is not able to provide access to anything approaching the level of healthcare we have in Scotland and in consequence rural communities in particular are extremely vulnerable to the spread of the pandemic. Accordingly the congregation's ambitious plans for their ReJoin Art Project to manufacture a minimum of 2,000 face masks and to provide their community with better access to hand-washing facilities and sanitisers are to be commended as is their work to secure restrictions on village gatherings and the observance of social distancing.

It is now pleasing to report that we have received a number of donations to support these efforts in response to which I have received the following message from Alick Banda, the Project Leader:

I write to confirm that ReJoin has received the project funds amounting to mwk 570,000 and that we are very grateful for the funding. This amount will really have a great impact on the lives of people in our community.

I have already arranged the meeting with our Co-ordinator, the entire session, The Traditional Authority, The District Health Officer, some government top officers, community representatives and the team at ReJoin so that we work together in fighting against COVID 19. I will keep you updated.

Once again, thank you so much Bill and the entire Church of Scotland for the timely support .

Rev. Asayiwe Mwenitete has also written as follows:

Let me register my great appreciation to you for your effort to share to other members in Scotland the rejoin art project proposal on covid-19 pandemic. The response to the proposal is a sign that Malawi is at the heart of Scotland which always comes in whenever we (Malawi) have been challenged in one way or another not only on spiritual matters but also non spiritual issues so that a good number of people in Malawi are secured or assisted. I thank you and all who have donated towards the project and their financial donation of MK570,000.00 will help the rejoin art project to another step in which a recommendable number of the society will benefit as pertaining to health issues on the covid-19 pandemic.

Today, Monday 22 June, Limphasa is not fine because we have lost one Church elder. Burial arrangements are underway possibly Wednesday or Thursday because of fresh presidential elections tomorrow. The atmosphere in the country is not healthy. Remember us in your prayers for God's intervention in tomorrow's elections.

Once again may God bless you and the Church there.

Further donations for this project will be most welcome and these should be made payable to '**Portland Parish Church of Scotland: Troon**' or remitted by bank transfer to the church's account with Bank of Scotland at **Sort Code 80-09-88 and Account Number 00931213 and referenced 'C-19 Malawi'**. Where possible all such donations should be GiftAided and it would be appreciated if you would notify me when donating to ensure that these are then aggregated for transfer to Malawi as soon as possible.

Bill Weir



SOLAR LAMPS

From Malawi

Pleased to inform you we have just received the solar lamps boxes from Lilongwe. We have received twenty-four boxes and am told that the other twelve are for Bandawe and confirmed to Rev Andrews Bipa that their boxes are here.

Solar lamps distribution is over. Every congregation in our presbytery has collected its two boxes each with 24 solar lamps. The congregations and the presbytery we are so appreciative.

May God bless you abundantly.

Greetings to all our partner churches in Scotland.

Rev Asayiwe



DOORS OPEN DAYS 2020 is going digital!

Scotland's biggest free festival of architecture will present its largest ever digital offering this September, as we celebrate Scotland's buildings and stories online, through tours, lectures, DIY learning events and more.

We're responding to current concerns surrounding COVID-19 by making Doors Open Days 2020 more digital so that people across Scotland and the world can continue to safely explore Scotland's buildings, spaces and places. A limited number of venues will still be open for physical visits this year, but we expect most people will enjoy new and cherished Scottish sites from the comfort of their armchair!

All across Scotland, we're harnessing the good will and spirit of adventure of local organisations to create unique content that will inspire, educate and amuse anyone with an interest in buildings. Last year virtual visitors could scale the heights of Paisley Abbey and our Young Advisory Panel staged Instagram takeovers – what digital discoveries will you make this year? We're asking venues and groups to produce a wide range of online offerings, such as Facebook and Instagram Live guided tours, recorded oral histories, webinars, 360-degree tours, virtual exhibitions, question and answer sessions and more. If you're interested in joining in, we have compiled some great [resources and ideas](#) for venues and organisations interested in taking part that will help you take the first steps.

We'll be hosting everything here on the [Doors Open Days website](#), from where you'll be able to explore nooks and crannies in venues large and small across Scotland this September. The Scottish Civic Trust will also be creating a weekly zine highlighting all of the exciting digital events and tours, which will be sent out through Doors Open Days' social media channels and [e-bulletin](#).

Extract from Doors Open
Day website



Visit the Troon Portland web page for our Weekly Sunday Service—Choir anthem, prayer, bible reading, sermon and hymn singing—JOIN US.

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: Dorothy Howden

Hall's Convener: Catriona McKellar

The Parishioner: Margaret Short

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