

THE PARISHIONER

May 2023



***The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not
be in want.***

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

Dear Friends,

One of the joys of my time with you all in Troon is the beautiful view from the Manse study into the garden. At this time of year, as the blossoms on the trees are superbly beautiful, even the greyest skies can seem less oppressive when framed with glorious white and red petals and the signs of plants and trees recovering from their winter slumber. As we celebrated Holy Week and Easter, I found our gardens and shared green spaces to be places where not only peace and tranquillity are witnessed, but also the inevitable cycle of life can be celebrated as we witness life being renewed and refreshed: rebirth is all around us.

If you were able to attend any of the services hosted by Troon Portland on behalf of Troon Churches Together during Holy Week, I hope that you found them a meaningful and encouraging time. It was a wonderful opportunity for the various and varied congregations to all meet together in shared worship, and I am grateful for all who helped to lead worship. In particular, we give thanks for Rev Andrew McGurk, Rev Keith Thomasson and Andy Hall who shared with us their thoughts and reflections on the stories we hear each year at this time. It is always good to hear different perspectives, and to come together as a community at this significant holy time was wonderful. We were especially delighted to have the combined choirs from Troon Old and Portland join in leading worship; their musical contributions greatly enhanced our time together. Truly, it is in our shared experiences and endeavours that we see the living Christ appear to each and every one of us, reminding, encouraging and enhancing our lives with the everlasting love of God.

As we look forward to the upcoming events of May, whether the coronation of King Charles III, various awards ceremonies and celebrations for our youth organisations, Christian Aid week, and the Garden Day, may we each see in our conversations, company and activities, the love of the eternal risen Christ within us and our community.

Much love to you all,

Gx

And it was April - Housegroup

and a fascinating discussion

An excellent leader had us thinking about (and you can do this too!) -

The person in the Bible for whom you have a soft spot

The person who you admire (JC not allowed)

A favourite verse/passage

A person who has helped you on your faith journey.

Believe it or not the first two took us ages to discuss with many interesting points emerging. We had started from John's reflection the previous Sunday on "doubting" Thomas who we felt had definitely been given a bad press.

But it certainly made us all think and ponder on the many stories we read from the Bible and to reflect more deeply. We thought of everyone from King David and Noah, to Ruth, Martha, Andrew and more. Who would you designate?

We had several readings before we started and were slightly amazed to find that TYCHITUS appears in many. Not a name most of us recognised. There are many in the Bible stories quietly getting on with preaching and living, and of whom we do not hear a great deal. Possibly a way forward for all of us.

Next Housegroup -

Wednesday 10th May, 7.30pm

All welcome, contact Barbie,
office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk



It seems a year or two since we held the traditional Holy Week services in Troon. The town churches hosted the services year about, and the ministers contributed an evening each. Troon Churches Together were keen to reinstate this tradition, despite a distinct lack of ministers. However Portland offered to welcome Holy Week services with Gillean hosting, but with a different preacher every evening. There were also prayers and readings from each of the churches involved. Every evening was different, with challenging themes and some fresh ideas. All were well attended.

Easter Sunday started at 6.30, on a grey cold beach. Andrew McGurk led the Communion and the singing---no microphone required. It was atmospheric and sombre ---and memorable. Seagate was serving up bacon rolls for breakfast. We then moved on to Easter morning at Portland where Communion was celebrated with Gillean. The sanctuary was beautifully adorned and the singing of the combined choirs a delight. There was a joyful atmosphere as “Thine Be The Glory, Risen conquering Son” rose to the rafters.

Avril McDonald



FORMING A CHURCH UNION – UPDATE

Choosing a new church name

Representatives from all three Churches of Scotland in Troon and our Interim Moderators have met monthly since January 2023.

In April 2023, the Presbytery of the South West sent two facilitators to join the group to guide us through the legal documentation called a “Basis of Union”.

The procedure was explained.

Where a union of congregations is specified by the Presbytery Plan the following steps must be taken to progress to union: -

1. A draft Basis of Union is prepared by the Kirk Sessions of the uniting congregations and Presbytery.

2. Presbytery send a copy of the draft Basis of Union to:

- The law department.
- Presbytery Planning.
- The Principal Clerk.

3. If necessary, the Basis of Union should be modified to incorporate any changes suggested by the law department and the Principal Clerk.

4. The Basis of Union must be approved by:

- The uniting Kirk Sessions.
- The uniting congregations (by way of a congregational vote).
- Presbytery.

A union of congregations will result in a name change for the newly united congregation.

In 2008 the General Assembly passed a deliverance instructing Presbyteries and congregations to comply with a scheme devised by the Legal Questions Committee for the naming of congregations to ensure compliance with the rules set out in the 2005 Act. The name must include: -

- A geographical reference (city/town/village).
- An additional name to identify the congregation within that location (only essential if there is more than one Church of Scotland in the city/town/village).
- The words “Church of Scotland”.

The new name for the united congregation is required for the Basis of Union document.

It is, therefore, vitally important that this new name is found as soon as possible.

The congregations will be involved in choosing this new name.

You are invited to suggest an appropriate church name and place it in the “suggestions box” (found in the church vestibule). If you are unable to do this, (or get someone to do this on your behalf), please send your suggestion by email to office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk.

We will accept suggestions until and including Sunday the 14th of May. On the next Sunday, the 21st of May, we will collectively (all three congregations) vote for a new church name from a list of most popular suggestions.

You will find more information on the church website, www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk.

We move forward in faith.

Prepared by: *John Reid, Session Clerk,
Portland Parish Church of Scotland, Troon*



GARDEN DAY 2023

Our plant sale this year will take place in Portland Church hall on **Saturday 27th May from 10-12.**

Come and buy bedding, perennials and vegetable plants and enjoy the fellowship.

There will be a Christian Aid coffee morning in the Old Parish at the same time and date so why don't you set the morning aside and support both?

The hall will be open on Friday afternoon(26th) to receive any plants you have brought on.

Jane Potts

ORGAN RECITAL



The next Organ recital will be in Portland Church on Sunday, 28th May at 3 pm. The organist will be Andrew Forbes, Director of Music at Glasgow Cathedral.

MESSY CHURCH

The second Messy Church of 2023 was on Sunday 23 April in Portland and, although the numbers continue to be low, it was heartening to see that almost all who came to our Pancake Party in February returned and that two of the families who didn't, let us know that they had a family party on that day. This time we chose the story of the Feeding of the 5000.

As people gathered, parents and children went round the church to find the answers to a quiz on the story, so that Gillean's message stimulated lively responses when it came to the worship. Keith led the singing with action songs. The craft team provided excellent activities on the theme, foam fish necklaces, laminated table mats, fish-shaped biscuits to decorate, a stained glass window of the story and a 3D fish. Refreshments were limited to coffee, tea, fruit drinks, biscuits and fruit, rather than the past practice of a cooked meal at the end. Throughout the afternoon relationships were fostered and deepened.

The support from so many people made for a very happy atmosphere and I should like to thank all the Portland people who came along to help with setting out and clearing away the tables and cushions in the church and the hall, welcoming folk, and making tea and coffees.

We are still experimenting with the formats, including how best to advertise to bring along children and parents, particularly those with no regular church connection. All comments and suggestions on this are very welcome. We have a Facebook page, so please have a look at this for photographs and information about past events and future plans.

Sandra McCallum (Portland)





CHRISTIAN AID WEEK IS 14TH - 21ST MAY

You seriously do not want to miss the amazing

SOUP LUNCH.

SUNDAY 14TH MAY

AT ST MEDDANS : following all the church services.

£7 Cash only please, for wonderful soup/sandwiches/cake/coffee/ tea

OR

The superb, exciting
COFFEE MORNING
with bookstall and tombola !!!

SATURDAY 27TH MAY 10.30-12.30

AT TROON OLD PARISH

£3.50 - cash down to find superb coffee/ tea/cakes and bargains

Any offers of help gratefully received, including for baking.

Monies are desperately needed for the many suffering drought, famine, crop failure and war.

This is a FOUR church effort as St Ninians' are part of our Christian Aid team, and thus it is a true Troon Churches together event.

Barbie Short : office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk

ZAMBIAN VISIT

When I arrived in Zambia at the beginning of February, it was the end of the Rainy Season, but there was still to be an amount of rain to fall. We were to catch the tail end of tropical storm “Freddie” which was to cause such devastation in Malawi. The continuing rain was welcomed though in Zambia as the water table was finally rising after a period of prolonged drought. Lake Kariba was filling up and the turbines at the mighty Kariba dam would produce electricity again. No more outages; industry could have a more reliable supply; the copper mines in the north could go into full production again and earn much needed foreign currency; homes could hope for a more reliable service.

After a gap of roughly four years I noticed how Lusaka had grown. So many new shopping malls, shiny hotels and restaurants, financial buildings and big wide roads with flyovers, built of course by China. This inevitably brought increased traffic which could and did lead to incidents of gridlock.

The family now live about forty minutes out of the city and the final part of the journey is on the familiar reddish brown dirt road flanked on one side by fast growing maize and on the other by field after field of varying crops. The rains were working their magic.

A highlight of my holiday was to revisit the town of Livingstone with a three night stay in a hotel on the banks of the mighty Zambezi river just above the Victoria Falls. Livingstone is the only town in Zambia to have retained its colonial name out of respect for David Livingstone who is still held in very high regard.

The Victoria Falls or Mosi-oa-Tunya meaning, The Smoke that Thunders, are the most amazing sight. They are a mile wide and a sheer precipice drop of 335 feet, which produces the largest curtain of falling water in the world. The spray produced by this water crashing into the gorge below can rise so high that from a distance it really does look like smoke rising out of the surrounding flat land. I wasn't able to climb down the steep and slippery path this visit but had the wonderfully exciting experience of flying over the Falls in a helicopter and then flying down into the Gorges just a few feet above the water which was in full spate. Very exhilarating if somewhat scary.

Back in Lusaka it was lovely to attend worship again in St Columba's Presbyterian Church. It is an early start on a Sunday morning. The first service is at 8 am. Remember it is a 40 minute drive into town and my son Douglas was the duty elder on the final Sunday, which meant we also stayed on for the 2nd service as the duty elder takes an active part in both services. The first service is very similar to our Church of Scotland service, while the later has evolved into a more African form with more singing and participation.

Perhaps in reality it was a long morning but I didn't find it so. It was wonderful to be part of such a joyous occasion. Between services Doug and I shared coffee with the Reverend Chaka Habasila whom I had already met socially .He was most interested in and concerned about our situation here in Troon and asked me to pass on his sincere good wishes to everyone in the congregation for the future. It is very special to know that while we move forward to form a combined Troon Church of Scotland there is yet another Church in Africa praying for our future.

Isobel Johnson



**OUR NEXT ISSUE OF THE
PARISHIONER WILL BE FOR
JUNE
PLEASE SEND ANY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUR
MAGAZINE TO —parishioner45@gmail.com**

By TUESDAY 23RD MAY

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