

# THE PARISHIONER

October 2023



*We thank you then, O Father,  
for all things bright and good,  
the seed-time and the harvest,  
our life, our health, our food.*

*Hymn 229*

## 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,

We certainly feel like we're experiencing a change in the weather as Autumn and winter start their annual approach. It is funny how we so often mark our year not only with the lullaby of the changing seasons, but the different aspects of life as we celebrate it. On the 24<sup>th</sup> September when we were all in Troon Old church, we celebrated Holy Communion



together, and during the talk with the children, we discussed the markers of our year in food terms. The children were able to identify such delights as birthday and Christmas cakes, and there was much discussion about chocolate hearts which could be eaten around the time of Valentines Day.

When we gather together as a community to share in a sacred meal, there can be a connectedness we perhaps don't get to experience on a 'normal' Sunday. Communion is an opportunity for us to reconnect not only with each other, our friends, neighbours and church family, but also with Jesus and our tradition of sacred story about his last few days. In the communion liturgy, we tell the story of Jesus' last meal with his friends in the Upper Room, and each time we share the bread and wine with each other we are re-enacting the love Jesus was sharing with his friends:

We are here because Jesus has invited us.

When Jesus was on earth, he often enjoyed meals with his friends.

On the night before he died, when darkness was beginning to fall, he sat at table with the disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem.

At this Last Supper, he broke bread and took wine, and told his disciples to remember him by following his example.

Today, we are his disciples, and we are glad to do what he has told us.

It is often in the sharing of important traditions that we find our deepest meaning, when we connect with each other and recognise the Divine, God is present with us. As we continue to share together in our worship services with St Meddan's, it is good that we can start to create and tell a new story of the church community in Troon. As we come together there will be many new traditions that can be created, and the stories we tell each other of our shared Christian fellowship will be guides for our future as we join in singing a new song of love for Jesus. And let us hope there will be the opportunity to share in some cake too!

Much love to you all,

Gillean xx

It was a meeting to start our year off and we started with a bang.....**HOUSEGROUP**

We started with Exodus, continued through Leviticus, John and Colossians to Galatians . The subject was ICONS and whether they helped or hindered faith and worship. Whether they were merely exotic pictures to admire as art or helpful images to aid prayer. Whether they should just be admired as Art.....

The subject took off to discussion on worship and differing styles and how to take that forward in a meaningful way.

And we ended with tea and chat and fellowship .

Next meeting is :

**Wednesday 11th October 7.30pm**

Queries to Barbie : [office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

All are welcome please do feel you can just turn up.

# **DATES FOR DIARY**

Sunday Services for Portland Church and Troon Old during October starting at 10.30am:

1st October – Celebration of Harvest

8th October – Troon Church of Scotland joint service with Portland, Troon Old and St. Meddan's (held in St. Meddan's)

15th October

22nd October – Special guests – Tearfund

29th October



Messy Church – Friday 6th October in St Meddan's at 3.30pm.

Book Group – Every Monday in October in Portland Church Millennium Room at 7pm.

Story and Song - Free weekly sessions of songs, stories and a snack every Thursday morning, at St Ninian's Church halls on Bentick Drive, 10am till 11:15am for children from birth to school age. For more information, please contact Gillean

Messy Vintage – Wednesday 4th October in the Suncourt Nursing Home at 2.30pm.

Coffee, Cake and Chat – Thursday 19th October in Sandhill Gardens at 1pm.

Home Service - a short service will be held in Sanderling View on 25th October starting at 4pm.

Church Halls – Details about the activities in Portland's Church Halls can be found via a link on our

website: [www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk](http://www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk).

## A September Sunday

On 10<sup>th</sup> September we drove along to Crathie Kirk from Aberdeen. Queues were already forming, but the weather was hot and sunny and the police in mellow mood. The King and Queen would enter by a side door after the congregation was seated. We sat under the bust of Queen Victoria and the service began – no screens, no live stream, just old fashioned hymnbooks and discrete amplification.

The guest preacher, Rev Moira McDonald, talked of the problem of conflict in relationships, community, church. How to call people out, how to resolve disagreement and forgive wrongdoers. We prayed for the King, the “passing of the baton”, we sang the National Anthem, there was a flash of the royal kilt and we were out in the sunshine.

Driving back to Aberdeen, we stopped at Cambus O’May, that lovely white bridge crossing the Dee near Ballater. There were people swimming, picnicking, jumping off the bridge into the water. We sat down on the banks of the Dee and thought of home. Phones revealed the service in Troon Old with Catriona reading the very same passage (Matthew 18) that had been read in Crathie. We listened as Gillian tackled the same subject in her sermon, of discord in our lives and in churches. A different interpretation, a different solution. The phrase “taking the plank out of our own eyes before removing the grit from others” hit home. Being less judgemental about conflict and experiencing the love of God in our own thoughts and actions seemed a better solution. Hopefully the conflict would be dissipated as the joy of God’s love infiltrated all our lives.

We drove back to Aberdeen, well pleased with our morning.

Avril McDonald



Cambus O'May Bridge



Crathie Church

# Book Group

During September the Book Group have been reading and discussing 'The Last Week – What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem' written by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

Reading a couple of chapters each week before coming together on a Monday evening for an hour to discuss them enables us all to ask questions about the books content as well as share our thoughts on the messages we've each taken from the text.

Our discussions are always good natured, and everyone is encouraged and given space to share their thoughts on the conclusions the authors draw. For me this is where the real joy of our group is found. Because we are each on our own faith journey, we each have a slightly different perspective, and this enables each of us to offer slightly different thoughts and insights despite us all having read the same text.

At times, for me at least, our discussions can be challenging and thought provoking but my experience, and this is the third book I've read with the group, is that it's always rewarding.

More weeks than not I find myself sitting down after our meetings with a cup of tea reflecting on what's been said and why. This is the time when the book really comes to life for me, where my thoughts and understandings are broadened and deepened through the insight others have offered. It's safe to say that the discussions generated by the books we've read have helped me to learn and understand more about the Gospels and the teachings their Parables offer.

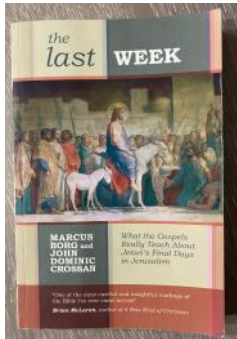
As for the book, it's been an enjoyable if not at times a controversial read. The authors use Mark's text to provide an insight into Jesus's last week, taking each day in turn and examining the messages behind the actions depicted before drawing a serious of conclusions that are as relevant today as they were 2000 years ago.

Would I recommend reading this book on your own, maybe.... would I recommend reading it in a group, absolutely.

If you'd like to join us to read and discuss our next book, please look out for details in the weekly intimations and come along.

*Calum Sim*





Book Group



## DOORS OPEN DAY

I would like to thank all who helped with the 2023 “Doors Open Days”. Along with Troon Old and St Meddans, Portland opened its doors on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> September, from 10am to 4pm and Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> September, from 1pm to 4pm.

Helpers gave so generously of their time to welcome visitors, taking them around the church and always ready to answer questions which was so much appreciated.

On both days the weather was hot, bright and very sunny so, on entering the church, visitors enjoyed the cool and quiet of the sanctuary, Over 70 visitors, mainly from the Glasgow area, were welcomed into the sanctuary. Before leaving, visitors signed the Visitors Book and I quote a few comments that may give some idea of how much their visits were enjoyed and appreciated.

“Beautiful” “Inspiring” “Fabulous Building”  
“So Peaceful” “God’s peace in this church” “A very warm welcome - Love is here” “The Lord bless you all”

*Sheona Cameron*



# **St Meddan's Community and World Concerns Charity Lunch**

## **22 October 2023**

Our Autumn Charity Lunch will be in aid of the **Ncevu Memorial Congregation in Komani (previously known as Queenstown), South Africa.**

St Meddan's has had links with this congregation since the late Rev Amos Mpongoshe was here on exchange with us as a probationer under David Harper's tutelage 35 years ago. We previously supported them through our Congregational Project in 1995 and again in 1999/2000 and more recently we receive updates from them through our link person Catherine Howlett, so that we can support each other through informed prayer. After reading about some of their current problems in the latest letter, the committee felt we would like to use the money raised at our Autumn lunch to support them.

The lunch will be held at 11.45 am after the services on Sunday 22 October 2023 in St Meddan's Pentland Hall. Tickets priced £7, £3.50 for children, will be available in all churches from the beginning of October. We look forward to this time of fellowship with friends from all three churches in Troon and to hearing more news from our friends in South Africa.

Jennifer Lawrie will have tickets for sale in Portland and they will be available at the joint service at St Meddan's on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Ann Kelly

## **ORGAN RECITAL**

On Sunday 24th September people from across Ayrshire and Renfrewshire braved the threat of stormy weather to enjoy the third in a series of organ recitals at Portland. Our organist was Chris Nickol of New Kilpatrick Church, Bearsden (who incidentally remembered Rev Ron Boyd from his time there).

Chris gave a delightfully varied programme of approachable music which not only showed off his fine musicianship but also the wide range of sounds available on the Portland organ.

The final recital in the "Music at Portland" series for 2023 is on Sunday 19th November and will be given by a very talented young organist, Peter Shepherd, formerly Assistant at Paisley Abbey and now Director of Music at Chesterfield Parish Church.

*Andrew McConnell*



# Proposed Changes to the Scottish Churches Disability Group

SCDG depends entirely on volunteers, as it has no paid staff. In our newsletters we have appealed for new Committee members, especially for the key posts of Secretary and Web Editor, which have been vacant for 4 and 2 years respectively. As SCDG's Committee will not "abandon ship" while work remains to be done to achieve disability inclusion in churches new ways of operating are now being explored,

The essence of the current proposal is that SCDG should become a regional group within **Through the Roof**, which is a UK wide charity with long experience of promoting disability inclusion in churches. This means that SCDG would cease to be an independent charity, but could continue to offer a Facebook page, a newsletter and the resources which have been built up on our website.

If this is accepted at the AGM, there would be a time of transition while administrative matters are discussed. Information about Through the Roof can be found on the website <https://throughtheroof.org/>

*Sandra McCallum*



## SCOTTISH CHURCHES DISABILITY GROUP WORSHIP AND ANNUAL GATHERING

*Saturday 7 October 2023*

*Dalziel St Andrew's Church, 47 Merry St, Motherwell ML1 1JJ*

### PROGRAMME

*10.30 Doors open*

*11.00 Worship service*

*11.45 Break*

*12.00 Lunch*

*1.15 Annual General Meeting*

*2.15 Inclusive Music Workshop - Led by Graeme MacDonald,  
Richmond Craigmillar Church, Edinburgh*

*2.50 Concluding thoughts and blessing*

*3.00 Departure*

*IT IS POSSIBLE TO ATTEND ON-LINE Anyone interested please contact  
Mr William Walker, 3 Marguerite Drive, Lenzie, G66 4HF*

*Tel. 0141 775 2521*

*william@equestra.net*

**OUR NEXT ISSUE OF THE  
PARISHIONER WILL BE FOR  
NOVEMBER  
PLEASE SEND ANY  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUR  
MAGAZINE TO —[parishioner45@gmail.com](mailto:parishioner45@gmail.com)  
By TUESDAY 24TH OCTOBER  
Distribution Sunday, 29th October**

### **Contact Details**

**Locum Minister:** Rev. Gillean Richmond  
[GRichmond@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:GRichmond@churchofscotland.org.uk)

**Interim Moderator:** Bill Duncan  
[interimmoderator@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:interimmoderator@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**Session Clerk:** John Reid  
[session@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:session@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**Treasurer:** Catriona McKellar  
[treasurer@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**Church Officer:** Ruaridh McKellar  
[churchofficer@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:churchofficer@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**Church Office:**  
[office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**Organist/Music Convener:**

**Hall's Convener:** Catriona McKellar  
[halls@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:halls@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)

**The Parishioner:** Margaret Short  
[parishioner@troonportlandchurch.org.uk](mailto:parishioner@troonportlandchurch.org.uk)  
Articles to [parishioner45@gmail.com](mailto:parishioner45@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk](http://www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk)  
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