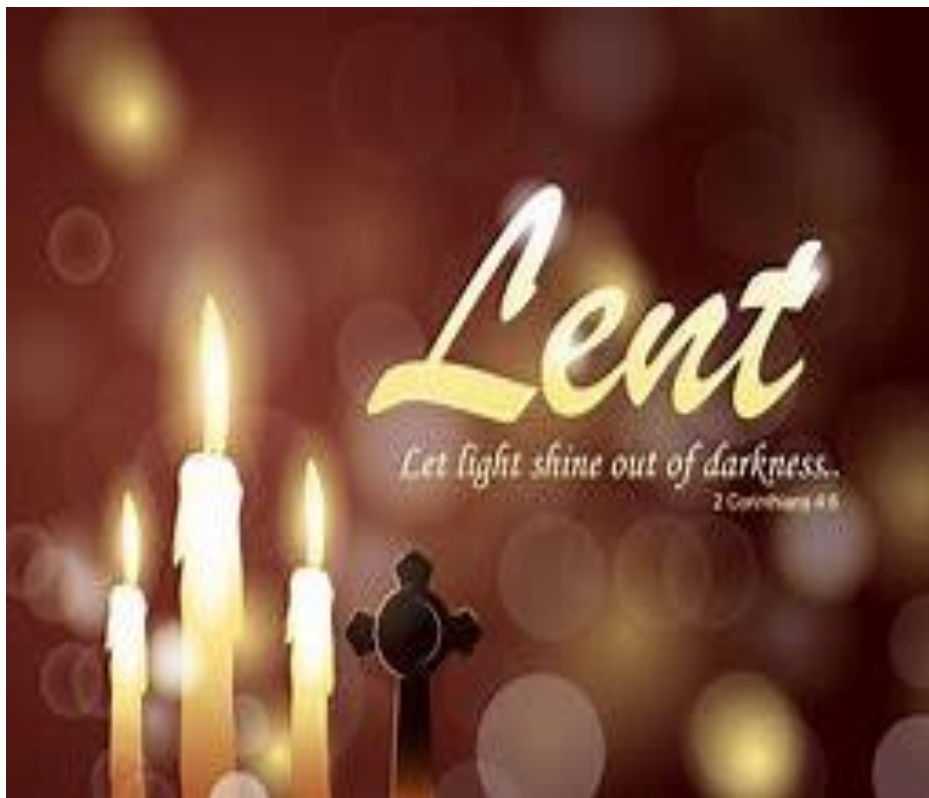


# THE PARISHIONER

February 2024



## 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,

It is quite amazing how quickly our year moves on. It seems no time at all that we were all preparing for Christmas and to celebrate the birth of Christ. When you read this, we will have celebrated Candlemas which marks the feast of the presentation of Jesus at the temple which happens on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February each year, 40 days after we mark Jesus' birth. It also marks the time when our year turns to look towards the 40 days preparation of Lent which of course starts on Ash Wednesday.



As a child I was always perplexed by the close proximity of Christmas to Lent, and we can of course, relate this current position in our year to the synod which happened in Whitby Abbey, 664 CE, overseen by the Abbess Hild. Until this point, two major branches of Christianity celebrated Easter at different times during the year according to their calendars. In the end, the Roman date was adopted by the Celtic Christians, and we retain this legacy.

Now known as St Hild, the abbesses' fame was secured locally with the snakestones legend, which dates back to the Middle Ages. The legend holds that Whitby and the surrounding area was plagued by snakes. Locals sought the help of St Hild, and she in turn prayed to God. First she prayed to remove the snakes' heads, and then she prayed to turn their bodies to stone. In one account of the legend St Hild invokes the Gospel of St Mark 11:23, and utters Christ's words, 'Be removed and cast into the sea.'

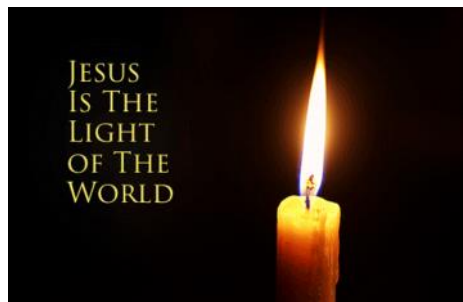
Headless snakes can still be found today on Whitby's shoreline. But we now know that these enigmatic objects are in fact ammonite fossils. The fossils date from the Jurassic Period, and enterprising Victorians used to carve snakes' heads into them to sell to tourists.

In the wondrous twisting of folk-lore, fable and religion, we see the passing on of knowledge, faith and meaning. Of course, St Hild is not the only Celtic Saint to have been credited with the removal of snakes: St Patrick is rather more famous for his legend of snake removal from Ireland. In another legend shared this time by the Venerable Bede, St Hild's mother had a vision of Hild as a light: Bede indeed saw that Hild's involvement in the spread of Christianity and her part in helping to settle the timing of Easter showed her to be a light in the world, active in the passing of the light of Christ across the whole of Britain.

As we celebrate the light of Christ this year at Candlemas, we are all encouraged to take the light of Jesus into our worlds, and to shine this light into places of darkness. I pray that you all feel that light in your life and are able, in your own way, to spread the light of Christ in your own part of our country in beautiful Troon.

Much love to you all,

Gillean xx



# HOUSEGROUP is .....

- a group of people of faith
- who discuss the bible and subjects relevant to it
- in the hope of understanding more of the world around us
- in a Christian way

And enjoy a chat at the end.....

Everyone is welcome to come and try for themselves, if it is for them. We discussed Advent in December .

And in January we moved on to War.....

From the Old Testament of 'an eye for an eye' : Exodus and Deuteronomy, to the real explanation of 'turning the other cheek' in Matthew, further going on to Luke and 'loving your enemies'.

We considered 4 aspects of war :

- non resistance
- pacifism
- just war
- preventative strike

None of this is easy, especially in the current climate. So it helped all of us to the final answer :

W.....W.....J.....D

I expect you are all spot on: *What Would Jesus Do*

And with that in mind the cups of tea appeared and we dispersed until next time :

Wednesday 7th February at 7.30pm

More information from [news@troonchurch.org.uk](mailto:news@troonchurch.org.uk)

*Barbie Short*

# DIARY

**Sunday Services** for the church families of Portland and Troon Old during February will be in Troon Portland Church starting at 10.30am.

**The Troon Church of Scotland** Service will also be held in Portland Church on Sunday the 11th of February starting at 10.30am.

Everybody is very welcome to attend our worship services (or watch online). Children are very welcome and there will be a children's club to keep the young hands and minds entertained.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the service.

**Online Worship** – all of the Sunday Worship Services can be watched online live and can be found via a link on our website: [www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk](http://www.troonportlandchurch.org.uk) and also on Facebook.

**Messy Church** – Friday 2nd February at 3.30pm in St Meddan's Hall

**Bereavement Group** – every Tuesday at 10am in the Millenium Room, Portland Church.

**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 7th of February in the Suncourt at 2.30pm.

The morning **Saturday Café** held in Troon Old will be hosted on the **17th February** by the Anchor Boys.

# Thought for the Month

The Lord's Prayer has always rattled off our tongues, sometimes thoughtlessly, sometimes beseechingly, sometimes in desperation. I have always found the line "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" to be difficult, and "trespasses" not much better.

During lockdown I linked up with an old friend, now in Canada, and we shared services via zoom.

I like the version of the Lord's Prayer used in Parkwoods Church. Here it is:

## *The Lord's Prayer*

*Ground of all being, Mother of life,  
Father of the universe,  
your name is sacred, beyond speaking.  
May we know your presence today and always.  
May your longings be our longings  
and may they become words and acts of kindness.  
May there be food for the human family today  
and for the whole earth community.  
Forgive us our faults, and the false things we  
have done, and help us forgive those  
who have been untrue to us.  
May your love accompany us in times of conflict  
but also lead us into new beginnings.  
We pray in the light of life, in the vitality of life  
and in the glory of life which you have given us,  
both now, and forever.*

*Amen.*

*Avril McDonald*



# Sunday School

Thirteen happy children enjoyed a Christmas party in the Old Parish, with party food, games and a visit from a special person who arrived laden with gifts. A happy time was had by all.

We had a “pop-up” nativity this year again, which meant that adults took part as much as the children, and there was plenty of congregational participation. The Sunday School teachers enjoyed it as much as the children.

The Sunday School visited Suncourt nursing home before Christmas. Gillean took the service and we all joined in making Christingles. It is great to participate in this multi-generational worship.

*Jane Potts*



# CHOIR NOTES

The choirs of Portland and Troon Old have been enjoying singing together as a joint choir for many months now. The choir both helps to lead congregational singing and also provides choral items which we hope contribute to the worship on Sundays. It is good that we can use music that has been familiar for many years, but also include more recent music that is also worthy of being sung.

New singers would be welcome to join the choir at any time—you don't need to have any experience, just an enjoyment of singing. The choir meets on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm in Room 1 at Troon Old.

*Andrew McConnell*



## **MESSY CHURCH**

There was another successful Messy Church on 12th January. The theme was Noah and the children and families all had fun with the crafts, stories and singing. Next date is Friday, 2nd February 3.30—5.30 pm at St. Meddans Church Halls with a theme of Lent. There will be pancakes!

We will always welcome new volunteers to help in any capacity. It is a great opportunity to work with not only all three churches of Scotland, but the other churches in Troon too. Seeing so many young families at Church is very positive and uplifting.

Looking forward to welcoming both old and new families on the 2nd February, then on the 1st March.

*Jennifer Lawrie*



## **A message from the Session Clerk**

I hope it's not too late to wish everyone a very Happy New Year. This year, 2024, will see major changes to the Church of Scotland in Troon. As you will be aware, the three Churches of Scotland in Troon will form a union to become one. Our new name will be Troon Church of Scotland. To comply with Church Law, we have been working to complete a document called the Basis of Union that outlines the principles and agreements that unite two or more congregations within the Church of Scotland.

The draft Basis of Union is prepared by the Kirk Sessions of the uniting congregations and Presbytery. This draft Basis of Union has now been approved by all three Kirk Sessions, Presbytery, the Principal Clerk and the Law Department of the Church of Scotland. It now has to be approved by the congregations before the union can officially happen.

Presbytery will set a date for a congregational meeting, and we should be able to inform you of an exact date very soon. You will be asked to accept (or reject) the Basis of Union by casting your vote in person during this congregational meeting. The votes are counted by Presbytery and the result announced. Assuming the vote is in favour, then we can proceed to union.

The Basis of Union can be found on the Troon Church of Scotland and Portland's websites, and I would encourage you to read it when you get a chance. We will also send out paper copies of the Basis of Union to each member household in Troon and offer question and answer sessions (dates and times to be confirmed).

Page 1 of the Basis of Union sets out the principles and agreements with the remaining pages expanding these with greater detail.

Extract from Page 1 of the Basis of Union:

*The congregation of Troon Old Parish Church of Scotland (SC007246) and the congregation of Portland Parish Church of Scotland: Troon (SC003477) and the congregation of Troon St Meddan's Parish Church of Scotland (SC015019) shall be united on a date to be determined by Presbytery, and that on the following terms and conditions:*

**1. Name:** *The name of the united charge shall be Troon Church of Scotland and SC015019 will be retained.*

**4. Places of Worship:** *Both churches at present used and occupied by the congregations of Troon Portland and Troon St Meddan's will be the places of worship of the united charge. The church sanctuary at present used by the congregation of Troon Old shall be used, sold, let or otherwise disposed of subject to the titles on which it is held, subject to the approval of the Presbytery and, if necessary, the General Trustees or the General Assembly. The free proceeds of any such sale or let shall: (a) if falling within the scope of Act VII 1995, be credited to the benefit of the congregation in the Consolidated Fabric Fund; or (b) if not falling within the scope of the said Act, be held and applied for fabric purposes in connection with the properties of the congregation. The church located in the area of North East Troon in the parish of Troon shall be a Local Mission Church.*

**8. Ministry:** *The ministry arrangements will be as laid out in the Basis of Team Ministry. All the charges coming into the union are currently vacant. The charge will be reviewable after five years.*

I would encourage you to read the whole document and ask questions. You should be made aware that we cannot start proceedings to call a Minister until the union has officially been completed.

As a new Troon Church of Scotland, we have been allocated two full time equivalent posts of Word and Sacrament (Ministers) along with an O.L.M (Ordinated Local Minister) and a locally funded Children-Youth-Family Worker, all forming a Team Ministry.

I am happy to try and answer any questions either in person after worship on a Sunday and/or at the question-and-answer meeting (dates still to be arranged) or by email if that is more convenient.

We continue to move forward in faith.

Keep the church in your prayers.

*John Reid*  
*Session Clerk*

## **Next**



**St. Meddans Church**

**Friday 2nd February 3.30—5.30 pm**

Come along and enjoy a Bible story, music, crafts (e.g. decorate a pancake, make a lantern)

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult

*Troon Churches Together*

**OUR NEXT ISSUE OF THE  
PARISHIONER WILL BE FOR  
MARCH  
PLEASE SEND ANY  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO YOUR  
MAGAZINE TO —parishioner45@gmail.com  
By TUESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY  
Distribution Sunday, 25TH FEBRUARY**

### **Contact Details**

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**Session Clerk:** John Reid      01292 314475  
session@troonportlandchurch.org.uk

**Treasurer:** Catriona McKellar      01292 318602  
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**Church Officer:** Ruaridh McKellar      07444 432827  
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**Church Office:**      01292 317929  
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#### **Organist/Music Convener:**

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halls@troonportlandchurch.org.uk

**The Parishioner:** Margaret Short      01292 314791  
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