

Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

November 2016



Portobello and Joppa Parish Church

Worship takes place each Sunday at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church with two services – one at 9.30am and one at 11am



From the editor

We've reached the bucket list stage in our house: thinking about the places we'd love to visit while we're still fit enough to do so. A few weeks ago we spent a week in Florence and Venice and were duly impressed by their beauty. I managed to fall down some steps on a bridge in Venice (looking at the view of the Grand Canal rather than watching my feet). Clearly I need to be more careful if we're to survive long enough to tick more items off this list.

In this edition of *Soundings*, you can read something of Stewart's rather more sedate and mindful journeys during his sabbatical – more is promised for next month. Also, Tara, our new probationer, introduces herself, as does our new(ish) Session Clerk, Rosemary.

We hear from Michelle about events that are becoming traditions in PJPC – the travelling knitivity and the Breakfast Club's weekend away – and what's new – an extra section in the expanding Sunday Stars. Then she tells us more about reaching out to children with Godly Play.

In fact, a lot of this month's magazine has been written by Michelle! – reflecting the huge amount of wonderful work she does for our children and young people. Thank you, Michelle.

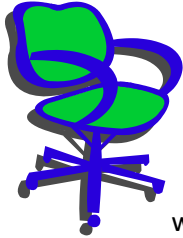
Also in this issue, you're invited to a curry supper in aid of ASHA (Michelle again); and to consider whether you could help with *Safe Families For Children*. And there's news from the Ladies' Golf Club, from Moira, one of our members – and the usual features.

Pam

From the minister

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

‘Be sincere. Be brief. Be seated’.

These words were attributed to Franklin Roosevelt and  were a part of an article outlining possible advice for Barak Obama before an election debate. Words of wisdom for those of us who speak in public.

Right now, I am seated (at my computer). Working backwards, I will thus be brief (especially because the deadline has long passed) and sincere.

I have just recently returned from a sabbatical and a bit of time away. Renewing and refreshing, yet interesting and challenging. There will be a summary in the next magazine and I’m sure you’ll hear about it during the services.

I spent a long weekend at Pluscarden Abbey appreciating the beauty of Latin singing and the coast of the Moray Firth. I also spent some time in a guided study on the story of David, overseen by my previous PhD supervisor.

On my return, I realise how much people have done to keep things moving along. Many thanks to Lourens and so many others who put in such time and dedication to the church.

Much has continued as before and yet there is much on the horizon: Remembrance Sunday, ordaining new elders, Christmas, stewardship. We live continually on that cusp between yesterday and tomorrow, that very cusp where we can work together with God as we are called to serve in this community and world.

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

These words from TS Eliot came to mind and I don't pretend that I understand them fully. But there is something about the eternal return that resonates: going away and coming back offers such insights into ourselves and our environments.

We always encourage people to attend worship and we are encouraging folks to become more worshipful or prayerful in their lives. The 'Retreat in Daily Life' is such an opportunity. Marking time off for an encounter with God. Perhaps that's the beauty of worship: we leave our everyday for time in eternity and then return.

And we can see it, truly and wonderfully and luminously, for the first time through the eyes of grace.

Hope to see you soon at worship or elsewhere....and I can bore you with my hoard (horde?) of sabbatical photos (oh dear, there goes the sincerity!).

Stewart

Hello from Tara, our probationer

Hello PJPC! You have another American in your midst. As your new probationer I thought I'd introduce myself a bit. I'm from Texas originally, though I've moved and travelled quite a lot. I grew up in Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) and have always been very involved in church life.

I did my undergraduate studies in history at University of North Texas and my graduate studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. During seminary I did an intensive yearlong internship serving as the assistant minister of a Presbyterian church in Groomsport, Northern Ireland. I loved my time there and ever since

have kept an ear out for any opportunities to come back across the pond more permanently. After graduation in 2015, I returned to Texas to complete a year residency in a Clinical Pastoral Education program working as a hospital chaplain in Dallas. I am certified ready to receive a call in PCUSA, and am just entering into my 15-month familiarisation placement.

My husband Ramon and I are newlyweds, married in February of this year. When the door opened to come here with the Church of Scotland, we decided it was too good an opportunity to pass up, so we held hands and jumped off the cliff together. It's a lot of change and transition, but we are thrilled to be here. I am looking forward to my time here with PJPC and getting to know all of you lovely people.

In Christ, **Tara**



Sunday Stars is Growing!

As you may have noticed, the Sunday Stars group is really growing! This is a great joy. Most weeks, our Supernovas group (P3-P7) has over twenty children taking part. The space we have by the stage in the main hall can be a bit small when we have such a full group. It can also be a bit intimidating to our younger Supernovas to have so many older children with them. For these reasons, and also to give our P6/P7 children something more age-appropriate to where they are with faith discussions, the Sunday Stars leaders have decided to split the Supernovas group into two.

From Sunday, 30 October, a P6/P7 group began meeting separately from the Supernovas (which will now be for P3-P5). The Supernovas (P3-P5) still meet in the main hall. Meanwhile, the "Shooting Stars" (P6/P7) group meets in the vestry.

I will be leading the Shooting Stars group most weeks, along with Jamie. As Jamie and I also lead the Breakfast Club, this will be a great way for the older

Sunday Stars to get to know us better as they begin to get ready to transition into youth group (our P7s are invited to youth group at Easter). Jamie and I will occasionally switch groups to lead the Supernovas. On those Sundays, Gillian, Christina and Ann will swap over with us to lead the Shooting Stars. We know the Supernovas children have grown close to all of the Supernovas leaders over the years so we are keen for them to have consistency, with having all of their original Supernovas leaders taking turns leading both groups.

There will be some weeks when both Shooting Stars and Supernovas come together in the main hall – if we have a guest speaker, a big craft project or a fundraiser to prepare for. We will always let the parents know when that happens so that they know where to pick up their children after church.

Though we are splitting up the Supernovas, we are still in need of more space in the main hall for our activities, so there will be a couple fewer coffee tables set out before church, to make room for the Supernovas. We are looking for some people who are willing to get their coffee last and instead to come down the Supernovas' end of the hall to help the volunteers to move the dividers away and set up the Sunday Stars tables into extra coffee tables, once all the children have been picked up by their parents. We are also looking for more volunteers to join the Sunday Stars team as we will need some subs to cover some Sundays at either Shooting Stars or Supernovas, now that the original Supernovas team is split across two groups. Please let me know if you can help in either of these ways.

Thanks for your understanding with these changes to Sunday Stars and to the coffee table set-up. Please can I also ask everyone's help to keep the vestry clear during the year? We have around ten children and two leaders meeting in there each Sunday now so it is quite helpful if the vestry doesn't become a storage location, so that it is clear enough for us all to meet there. Thank you! Please let me know if you have any questions. We are excited for this new direction for Sunday Stars and excited to see children's ministry continuing to grow at PJPC!

Michelle



Knitivity and the Messy Church Sheep Trail

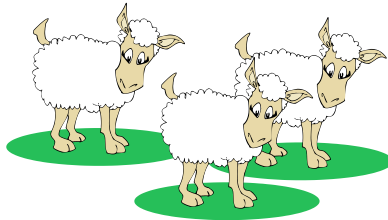
This year, Messy Church has put together two special projects for Advent called the knitivity and the Messy Church Sheep Trail. For the knitivity, we will share a knitted nativity set around people from Messy Church and the Sunday morning congregation, with it visiting 27 different houses between 26 November and Christmas Eve. Each house will get the set for 24 hours and then will pass it along to the next house on the list for their turn to share the Christmas story in their house for 24 hours. When the knitivity moves on to the next house, the previous house keeps a small knitted sheep to have in their home as a reminder of the knitivity. On Christmas Eve, the last house on the rota will bring the knitted nativity back to PJPC for it to be set up on a table in church at the 4pm baby and toddler service. This is the fourth year our knitivity is making the trip round the houses so it is well loved and also receiving a bit of loving repair from Muriel before heading out on the 2016 Advent journey. We also have several volunteers knitting wee sheep to travel with the set. If you would like to host the knitivity in your home this Advent, please speak with Michelle.

For the Messy Church Sheep Trail we have twelve knitted large sheep which will be scattered throughout Portobello and Joppa at twelve different businesses including shops and cafés as well as the library. There will be sheep trail handouts at the shops and at church for people to pick up to follow the trail, to try to find all twelve sheep around about town during Advent. When you find a sheep, you check the name of that sheep and write it on your handout, next to the name of the business where you found it. When all the sheep are found, you return your handout to the church in the sheep trail prize draw box which will be in the centenary hall. These handouts can be returned on Sunday mornings, during the week when community groups are meeting, at the December Messy

Church or on Christmas Eve. We will draw out the winning handout in a prize draw during coffee time on Sunday, 1 January and the winner will receive a Christmas basket full of lovely goodies.

Hope you get the chance to go on our sheep trail this advent. Our Messy Church Shepherd is desperate to find all his missing sheep! See Michelle if you have any questions.

Michelle



Reaching Strangers and Outsiders with Safe Families for Children

When your family is going through a hard time, small gestures go a long way. The church member who drops by with dinner or the relative who takes your kids for the weekend can be a lifeline when you're struggling.

Though hard for us to imagine, there are families in crisis in our community who have no friends or relatives to turn to.

Safe Families for Children connects these families to volunteers from local churches who want to help. Volunteers might befriend children or parents, host children for a short period of time, or serve them in practical ways. *Safe Families* wants to help you share God's love with your community. Alan from *Safe Families for Children* will be with us on Sun 20 November to talk about the work and explain how we can get involved.

Further information can be obtained via the website <https://www.safefamiliesforchildren.com/regions/scotland/> or by phoning 0131 603 8430 or emailing: scotland@safefamiliesforchildren.com

A call to prayer

HOW GOD PROVIDES

*“My God shall supply all your needs.”
(Philippians Ch 4 v 19)*



God will use different people at different times to meet different needs in your life. He used Pharaoh to feed the Israelites. Imagine that! When famine hit, He led His people down to Egypt and made Pharaoh feed them for 400 years. Get this: when we ask God for something, don't dictate to Him *who* He'll use to meet our need. Notice the words of Jesus: "Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure ... shall men give into your bosom," (Lk 6:38). *When God wants to bless us, sometimes He'll send a person!* But if we are too proud to accept their help, we won't get it, or if we limit Him to working through people we know and like, we'll miss the boat again. God used Pharaoh because he's not the kind of person we're apt to fall in love with. God doesn't want us getting hooked on anybody but Him. He can bless us our bosses, the tax man, the car dealer, the mortgage lender, or even those who mean us no good! It was betrayal by his brothers that eventually caused Joseph to become Prime Minister of Egypt. People will enter our lives and people will leave it. Praise God when they come and praise Him when they go, and remind ourselves: "If He blessed us before, He'll do it again".

Egypt only became a problem when God's people stayed there too long! Don't lean on the arm of the flesh too long, or the instrument of our blessing can become an idol (or a source of control). And that's a problem, for God said: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

H McNulty,

Prayer Promoter

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ASHA curry night

Asha is now transforming the lives of more than 500,000 slum dwellers in 60 slum colonies of Delhi.



Come along on Saturday, 12 November from 6pm-7:30pm for a curry dinner fundraiser for ASHA. Freddy Martin is in Scotland in November to speak about the work of ASHA and will share photos and stories of the most recent work ASHA has been doing in the slums of Delhi. This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about ASHA and share in fellowship.

The Breakfast Club are hosting the event and we'll be selling tickets at coffee time. Tickets are £5 per adult and £3 per child. Further donations towards the work of ASHA will be welcome on the night. Contact Michelle Brown for more details at families@portyjoppachurch.org

Below is an extract from an email to Michelle from Dr Kiran Martin, the founder of ASHA.

Dear Friends of Asha in Great Britain,

It gives me great joy to let you know that Freddy Martin will be visiting the UK in November this year.

It is exciting that during this trip an Asha graduate from the slums will be accompanying him. Your wonderful support over the years has meant that these amazing kids are being rescued from a life of harsh poverty and rising from the ashes to shine like stars.

One such graduate who represents all the kids you have been supporting is so looking forward to telling you their inspirational story. This will be the first time an Asha graduate will be travelling to the UK. Imagine what an exciting

opportunity this will be for a child born and raised in a slum, who would have never been able to dream of flying in an airplane! I am sure they will enjoy your wonderful hospitality as well.

When I began my work in the year 1988, I would have never imagined I would see something like this happen in my lifetime. This is such a wonderful testament to the way children raised in poverty can flourish through the powerful message of love, hope, and dignity that you have all given them through being a part of the Asha family and doing so much for them.

Kiran



Breakfast Club Weekend Away

During the September weekend, eight young people, three leaders, one driver and two wee Broons went up to the Glencoe Outdoor Centre for the Breakfast Club Weekend away. The youth group participated in mountain biking, sailing, canoeing, and archery during the weekend, played many games and shared several meals and great conversations throughout the stay at the centre. The centre is set in a beautiful part of the Highlands and the care we receive each year from the staff there is wonderful as the Breakfast Club takes over the full retreat centre during our stay. Glencoe Outdoor Centre is a Christian outdoor retreat centre and the staff shared with us more about their own faith journeys and challenged us to ask them any questions we had. It was wonderful to spend a weekend enjoying God's creation through outdoor sport and fellowship.

We are already looking ahead to September 2017 for the next trip up. Many thanks to the young people who took part, to Jamie and Lourens for excellent leadership, to Paul for driving the mini-bus and to Ben and Eilidh for letting mum go sailing and canoeing too!

Michelle



Annual autumn golf outing - Strictly Come Golfing

It felt a bit like a cross between “Strictly Come Dancing” and (for those of us old enough to remember) the “Qually Dance”. It’s the waiting and finger crossing and anticipation to see if you get paired with a ‘good’ partner. By ‘good’ I mean someone whose handicap (golf) means you have at least half a chance of not making a fool of yourself on the day. (I’m the equivalent of Ed Balls, but without enough friends to vote me back in for a return match.)

Oh, and talking about handicaps, Winnie, also known as Darcey ‘cos she always sees the best in everyone, invented some algorithmic equation which would make the bigwigs at the Royal and Ancient apoplectic. For example: my handicap at the Church Ladies’ Golf Club (meets on Tuesdays – all welcome but you have to be a lady – well not a real lady, female is fine) over 9 holes is 12. Winnie – aka Darcey – gives me a handicap of 29.5 over 12 holes. Don’t ask how she does it. It’s a secret. And I like it.

Back to the pairings. Darcey and Norrie - the Len Goodwin of the Church Men’s Golf Club - (meets now and then, plays all over the place) are on the phone for HOURS AND HOURS deciding who plays with whom. They have some sort of protocol system – don’t ask – but they say it’s based on trying to even out the handicaps !!!!!!! Now you can see how it’s like “Strictly”.

So there we are at Gogarburn Golf Club on a beautiful autumn morning, chewing bottom lips, false smiles on faces, waiting for Darcey and Len to announce the pairings. Despite all this trembling and hype we had a marvellous day out, though. The weather was kind, the golf was.....golf, the lunch in the clubhouse was really good and we had quite a few laughs on and off the course. So THANK YOU Winnie and Norrie for all the plotting and planning. It was a great day out.

Oh, do you want to know who won? Well..... it was Mandy and Alan.

Marion, aka Ed Balls

Godly Play Scotland Conference 2016

During school breaks, you may have heard Stewart or Lourens mention that there will be Godly Play in the halls. If you have ever wondered what Godly Play is, then please do speak with me at coffee time and I will be more than happy to tell you about this way of sharing Bible stories with children, young people and adults through welcoming, story, wondering, response, sharing of a feast and saying our goodbyes. I am a trained Godly Play storyteller and since April 2015, I have also been serving on the planning team for Godly Play Scotland as a volunteer Godly Play Advocate. We recently held the first ever Godly Play Scotland national conference and I wanted to share more with my PJPC family about this incredible weekend at the start of October. Quotes from the article below will appear in Life and Work magazine.

From 7th to 9th of October 2016, twenty-eight people gathered at the College of the Holy Spirit on the Isle of Cumbrae for the first ever Godly Play Scotland national conference. Our focus was on Jesus and Children as we listened to several inspiring addresses by Gemma, a nun from the Congregation of Jesus, who encouraged us in our work with children through Godly Play. She reminded us to look at the importance of spiritual direction in this ministry as she said, “We’re holding in our hands the children of the world and we are held in His own.” We were reminded of the importance of community, humility, encounter, vulnerability, mystery and so much more. We were also encouraged to know that all things great have small beginnings. Starting first with welcoming children to the Godly Play circle and then building on that with stories and wondering can be the start of many children and young people growing closer to God as we too are brought closer to Him.

During the weekend, we shared many great meals together as friendships and connections were made across the table. With participants travelling from all over Scotland, there were many people re-connecting as well. There was a real buzz of excitement in the refectory and sitting room as talk of future conferences and new directions for Godly Play Scotland were envisioned.

There were many opportunities to hear Godly Play stories throughout the weekend and several workshops including: Godly Play in Schools, Spirituality of Children, Godly Play with Teenagers, Wondering and Response, Different Contexts for Sharing Godly Play and Approaches to God Through Godly Play in Different Liturgical Contexts.

We joined the Cathedral of the Isles congregation for worship on Sunday morning and were blessed by the telling of a new Godly Play story – The Story of St Mungo as written and told by Godly Play Scotland Trainer, Alex. We finished the conference with a reflection on story, wonder and song as Linda Pollock encouraged us to blend Godly Play storytelling with music in all age worship.

The weekend was packed with content and connections. The response was overwhelmingly positive and the planning team for Godly Play Scotland is certain this will not be the only conference – we will look forward to planning for our second conference in 2018! We encourage you to find out more about Godly Play, as a way of spiritual direction for children, teenagers and adults and we wonder if you might join us for the next conference and the continued discussion of Godly Play in Scotland.

For more information on Godly Play, please visit our website:

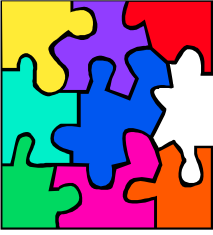
<http://www.godlyplayscotland.co.uk/>

Michelle

Pamper and Shopping Night – 7 November

Guild Fundraiser
Pamper and Shopping Night
Monday 7 November 7-9pm
Tickets £5 (includes refreshments)
Treatments cost £7-£10 on the night
All welcome





Brain-teaser

Remembrance Sunday falls on 13 November this year so I've been making words out of the phrase "Remembrance Sunday". I managed to get 35. How many can you get?

Here are clues to some of mine:

1. 1,2,3,4,5 N_____
2. "The holly has a ..." B_____
3. Big smiles B_____
4. The minister's house M_____
5. God rest you ..., gentlemen M_____
6. The Great British ... Off B_____
7. Strictly Come ... (ing) D_____
8. The trees will soon be ... B_____
9. Burning cinders E_____
10. ... yourselves: Christmas is coming B_____

Alison

(numbers, berry, beams, manse, merry, bake, dance, bare, embers, brace)



Getting to know you...

Rosemany, our new Session Clerk, thinks she joined the church about 20 years ago. Over the years she has helped in the Sunday School, with teas and coffees and also produces the Family Times Newsletter. She is now Clerk to Session, which she thinks will involve minute taking and sending correspondence out mostly - although she's sure it will probably grow!

Q. What is a favourite hymn, and why?

A. 'Here I am Lord'. It makes me think of my family and the people close to me.

Q. What is an early church memory?

A. I grew up in Stranraer and went to Sunday School at my mum's church. I remember one year being chosen as narrator for the nativity and being so nervous I was sick!

Q. What's your earliest *childhood* memory?

A. My granny died when I was 3 and I remember standing at the bottom of the garden waiting for a helicopter to come and take her up to heaven.

Q. What would be your ideal holiday?

A. My family all love America. We have been a few times to different places but my ideal holiday would be New Orleans and soaking up the atmosphere there.

Q. What is your most prized possession?

A. My Kindle Fire. I am an avid reader and don't go anywhere without a book.



Q. Tell us something that not many people know about you.

A. I used to do ghost tours around Edinburgh's Old Town.

Q. What do you do to relax?

A. I spend time with my family. With the kids getting older, any time we spend together is precious.

Q. What gets you up in the morning (apart from your alarm clock)?

A. My dog Ceilidh. I walk her most mornings.

News from Moira



Somebody said to me that it would be nice to have more personal articles in the magazine, so I thought I would try to write something.

I have had a busy year. I gave up driving, so had to get used to buses and had to find ways of doing shopping. So I bought a couple of backpacks and a shopping trolley. I also was getting bad when walking with 2 sticks so the doctor got me a walking aid with wheels. I called it Daisy but then changed this to Trixie.

Then I decided I needed a break, so booked a Caledonian bus trip to Oban with an excursion to Iona for 5 days. Unfortunately, there weren't enough people going so I had to change to another, 3-day, one.

I then got a text from my Granddaughter – would I rehome a 1 year old cat? I was actually thinking of getting a cat next year, so I said yes, I would take him. She said he was very timid – a bit bullied by another cat who ate most of the food laid out for them both.

So after my holiday, little Smudge has come to stay. He is indeed very timid. I couldn't find him for 4 days but he was eating food so must still be around. It will take a while but I'm hoping he becomes a friend.

A final piece of good news – my son and wife are going to have another baby next April.

Moira

MAGAZINE/DIARY DEADLINES

December/January	Sunday 20th November 2016
February	Sunday 22nd January 2017
March	Sunday 19 th February 2017

Scottish Charity Number : SCO11728

A photograph of a sunset over a large body of water. The sky is a gradient of orange and pink, transitioning to a darker blue at the top. In the distance, a low-lying landmass is visible, featuring two prominent, tall, thin structures that appear to be chimneys or towers. The water in the foreground is dark blue with gentle ripples. On the right side of the water, there are several small, dark, rectangular markers or buoys.

www.portyjoppachurch.org

Photography by Kim Kjaerside