

Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

October 2023



Portobello and Joppa Parish Church

From the editor

I remember reading an article about an actor who, at the beginning of his career, was asked to be the voice of a speaking bread bin in an advert. “After one take,” he remembered, “the director complained that I didn’t *sound* like a bread bin.”



We can’t please everyone; we’re all just doing our best. And like many others, I’m grateful for our worship team and their efforts to make our services more accessible to everyone – as Stewart discusses in his letter.

Lots of other things are also going on in the congregation, as you can read in this edition. There’s news of the Guild, including their concert on Monday October 9, and you’re also invited to Café Ceilidh on Saturday October 28th. If you’re young, you could join Junior Drama; if you’re not quite *that* young, you could join the Country Dancing Club. There are reminders about our recycling programme and a request for fabric for E Pachas. The Food Bank at the Wilson Memorial also needs contributions.

Kay gives us some thoughts about remembering people’s names – this may *possibly* have been inspired by a conversation with me, when I suddenly drew a blank on the name of someone I’ve known for – let’s say quite some time. Oh dear!

As well as all that, you can find out which of our congregation likes meat paste and who is a supporter of Queen of the South – and also who, in “Sunny Joppa”, has been planting sweet potatoes (that’s not too difficult to guess, maybe).

Many thanks to all contributors.

Pam

From the minister

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

‘I will not be coming back to church.’

‘Thank you for providing these services. The variety and choice is appreciated.’



There, at two ends of the spectrum, are reactions to the decision to continue with our offering of three services per Sunday.

As mentioned in the lengthy discussion document provided to Session (our main decision-making body... the Trustees in charity language), there was a recognition that this was no easy decision. Advantages and disadvantages were considered in depth. It was not taken lightly.

This discussion document was provided via the e-newsletter and in paper form prior to worship services over the past few weeks. If you would like a copy, please email either sweaver@churchofscotland.org.uk or office@portyjoppachurch.org.

For those who have decided that they no longer wish to attend, we are indeed sorry.

We will continue to monitor and adjust in order that the entirety of our Sunday mornings provide the worship, the fellowship, the learning, the laughter and the community that will speak of a small glimmer into the kingdom of heaven and perhaps draw more people into the economy of God's grace. All will be made most welcome.

For those who appreciate the offerings as they now stand, your thoughts, prayers and contributions will be most gratefully received. The extra input required will indeed require support and assistance from all and sundry.

In reflecting these discussions, and in looking at the paperwork, two themes come to mind.

Energy is one.

Where is there energy? Where is there the willingness to try something new and contribute the imagination and the hours to bring something innovative into being?

Which is not to suggest that something new and different was done simply to do something new and different. The statistics that have been shared indicate that there are challenges for every congregation in every part of Scotland. The experiments were offered and are now offered as an attempt to respond to a very different landscape and a different world. It is perhaps unwise to underestimate how much the worldview has changed in recent years. As an example, the number of baptisms and weddings has fallen precipitously: the ordinances of religion are simply not part of current culture.

But what is not necessarily a natural part of current culture is community and sacrificial commitment to people beyond the boundaries we often draw around ourselves. And that is what we are trying to do and that is where energy and hard graft and dedication come in.

The other theme is gifts.

A meeting is already arranged in order to encourage more people to contribute to the provision of our worship services. Where some may have been reticent to do so for the main, traditional service that lasted approximately an hour, the thought of doing so within a shorter service set within the entirety of the events of a rolling Sunday may be less daunting.

And this is set alongside the use of our gifts in the provision of tea and coffee, of conversation with others, of pastoral care and in working with our younger generations.

In the midst of a dynamic, open, fluid, faithful and supportive environment, the possibilities of sharing our skills and talents are multiplied.

We have spent months—actually, years—trying to discern God’s call to us as a congregation and we have stepped forward perhaps hesitantly but certainly faithfully into a new way of doing things. It may be a success, however that may be measured, or it may surface worries and concerns that are unexpected.


But, as stated before, doing nothing in the current context and climate didn’t really seem to be an option. Doing nothing is in many respects the same as going backwards.

We are trying with heart, mind, body, soul, spirit and humility to step out of the known and into the unknown in faith.

We’d love to have you with us.

Stewart

Diary – Worship

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Sun. 1 Oct. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional |  |
| Sun. 8 Oct. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional | |
| Sun. 15 Oct. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional | |
| Sun. 22 Oct. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional | |
| Sat. 28 Oct. | 4.00pm | Messy Church in Sanctuary followed by Cafe Ceilidh in Main Hall | |
| Sun. 29 Oct. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional | |
| Sun. 5 Nov. | 9.30am 10.30am 11.15am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional | |
| Sun. 12 Nov. (Remembrance Sunday) | 9.15 am 10.00 am 10.50 am | Quiet and reflective Informal and interactive Traditional with Two Minute Silence | |

Recycling update

Thank you for your continued support.

Sadly, **blister packs** now have to go into your black Council bin.



We collect:

Milk bottle tops. The new white ones weigh less and, as these are sold on by weight, the Borders Bottletops for Charity needs as many as you can muster - (try family, friends, neighbours?). Please, we can only use tops from milk bottles.

Old **electric cable** - there's money in copper (for Edinburgh Direct Aid and their overseas projects in crisis areas).

Used **ink printer cartridges**, **used stamps** and **old postcards**, **toothpaste tubes**, **old spectacles** and **lens packaging**.

GUILD NEWS

Elsewhere in the magazine is information about our fund-raising **LIVE MUSIC NIGHT** when we can enjoy some of our best loved popular music!

MONDAY 9TH OCTOBER AT 7PM

Tickets at £5 can be purchased after Church on Sundays and at the door.

On Monday evening 23rd October at 7pm, Kirsty from BEAT, one of our designated charities, will tell us about the various problems relating to eating disorders.



Junior Drama Group

Junior Drama are looking forward to returning on Thursday, 21st September. It's been a long four months with no rehearsals so it's exciting to be returning. We will have our team meeting in a couple of weeks to plan what we would like to do.

We hope to start by rehearsing a short comedy drama and song for the Café Ceilidh on October 28th. Hopefully there will be a short pantomime in December, though nothing has been finalised yet. Finally, we'll have our main show in May. We still have to decide which show we will do.

There are exciting times ahead for Junior Drama. We'll keep you updated on what is happening and we look forward to meeting all the children again soon.

Junior Drama meets in the church on Thursday nights from 7-8pm until February and then from 6:30-8pm until May. It is a very inclusive group who work on acting skills and singing throughout the school term, building up to performing a show in May.

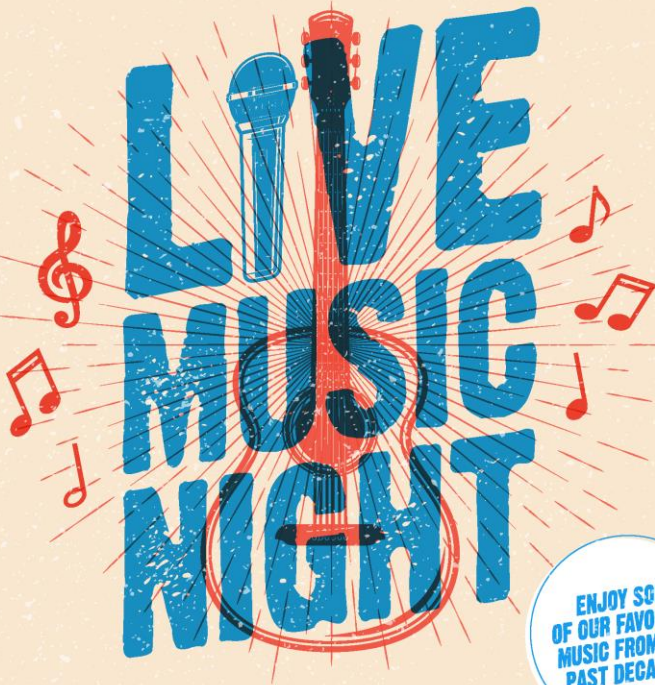
There is space for new members. If you know someone who is 7 years old up to secondary school age who would like to give it a try, then please contact Michelle.

Jamie

Acting is all about honesty. If you can fake, that, you've got it made.

George Burns

THE GUILD INVITES YOU TO THE



ENJOY SOME
OF OUR FAVOURITE
MUSIC FROM THE
PAST DECADES

MONDAY 9TH OCT, 7-9PM
AT PORTOBELLO & JOPPA PARISH CHURCH

TICKETS **£5** AT DOOR
ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS OUR GUILD PROJECTS

TEA, COFFEE & HOME BAKING AVAILABLE
AT THE INTERVAL. FAMILIES WELCOME.

FOOD BANK

Stocks at the Food Bank at Wilson Memorial Church are running low, especially the following items:



Tins of soup, beans, potatoes, rice, custard, tuna, mackerel; pasta sauce, curry sauce, jams, marmalade, microwave rice.

Food prices have gone up rapidly and more so on families with very low incomes. However, even one small donation would be helpful. Please leave your contribution at the back of the Church/Flower Room.

Thank you! Colleagues at The Food Bank would be most grateful.

Meg

Portobello and Joppa Church Scottish Country Dance Club

It is intended to restart the club on Monday 02 October 2023 at 7.00 pm.

Depending on the numbers that are interested, we would hope to meet every other Monday evening.

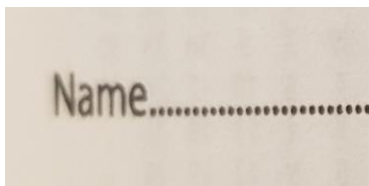
We are a very friendly club and would be delighted to welcome any new members.

We call and walk the dances through.

Hope to see you then.

Norrie

I can't remember your name



I Googled that sentence 'I can't remember your name' recently. That led me to some interesting pages. I ignored the links where the words featured in lyrics of songs but soon found these five steps to remembering names.

5 steps

1. Stop saying that you're bad at names...

This is by far the number one thing that stops people from learning names: they will emphatically tell you that they're "awful at remembering names."

Saying you can't do something sets your mind up to not do that thing. It's true with remembering names, and it's true with... literally anything else.

2. Say their name back to them...

People often aren't paying close attention when someone introduces themselves. The person receiving the introduction might feel nervous about meeting someone new, or they're more concerned about saying their own name for the other person to get right.

Your name can wait. Make it about the other person upfront. This shows people that you're interested in them as people.

3. Make associations in your head... (quickly and discreetly; there may even be more than one)

"Hello, my name is Jim."

"Jim [pause, look them in the eyes, smile], it's good to meet you. My

brother-in-law's name is Jim.”

While responding think (in your head), e.g. Picture your brother in law doing/being something specific. Your brother-in-law is in the Navy, so maybe I'll think of him in his uniform. Look at new Jim's face, picture Sailor Jim, look back at new Jim.

and/or

Think: “New Jim looks like he's in great shape. I wonder if he goes to the gym. Jim at the gym.”

4. **Say their name slowly and intentionally one more time before parting ways. ...**

This one is super simple: once the conversation is drawing to a close, say the person's name again. Look them in the eye while you do it.

"Jim, thanks for chatting. Great to meet you!"

5. **If you do forget, own up to it and ask them**

Asking someone to say their name one more time isn't the end of the world. It shows that you're willing to admit a mistake. It shows that you're willing to ask for help. It shows that you're trying to do better by that person.

Another thing I had confirmed was that the difficulty in remembering names is a normal part of ageing, starting usually when you are in your fifties. As we age it is also perfectly normal to sometimes forget which day it is and remember it later, or sometimes forget which word to use.

Christian people often speak of their congregation as being their ‘church family’ and think of their fellow-worshippers as being their ‘brothers and sisters in Christ’. The ‘church family’ is an important group in many people’s lives, perhaps

even more so for those who live alone. Maybe that's why we can tend to feel guilty about not remembering names. Don't! It's not the end of the world; it's just something that some of us might need to work at. You may be a person who has no difficulty recalling names; remember that the person you are speaking to may be struggling to do so.

I'm not a great fan of always wearing name tags, but perhaps the occasional use of them would help in this memory game many of us are regularly playing, particularly if new or relatively new to the congregation. Fancy, permanent ones can make some people feel excluded if they don't have one. They can suggest the wearer is a member of a club.

They should be environmentally friendly and therefore not use plastic. A one-off piece of paper and a pin might just do the trick - using big print and felt pen (so that they can be easily read from across a table.

"Good morning..." (you're thinking, "I can't remember her name.")

"I'm really sorry, but I can't remember your name."

"Wendy."

"Yes, (sound as if you remember that bit) but what is your surname again?"

"McDonald."

"Ah yes, Wendy McDonald."

!!!

Kay

'No,' said the cat. 'Now, you people have names. That's because you don't know who you are. We know who we are, so we don't need names.' **Neil Gaiman**

"It ain't what they call you, it's what you answer to." **W C Fields**



**Portobello & Joppa
Parish Church Present**

**Saturday
28th October
5pm-8.45pm**



Café Ceilidh

**An evening of song,
dance and drama
...with Fun Fiddle**

Donations appreciated

Whist drives

The other day I was doing my weekly shop in the supermarket. I usually get the same stuff every week. I do not like shopping, avoiding it at any cost, but on this occasion I noticed the familiar jars.

It was meat paste – not paté or any other posh version of the stuff, but genuine Sutherlands Meat Paste. I bought one of the small jars of the beef variety and when I opened it, the old familiar smell took me back so many years, to my childhood, when I was a fit and healthy boy. When I had it on my toast that day, I was transported back to my first encounter with a Whist Drive, and "Sutherlands Meat Paste".

The small village I grew up in had an amazing capacity for Whist Drives. There seemed to be one fortnightly: for the church, the Rural, the Guild, etc etc. Part of the process was that a person "took a table", I presume at the invitation of the committee. This involved this person finding three other people to make up a table and then providing refreshments for all four people.

Hardly anybody had a television, and there was only one channel available, filled with programmes such as, "The Brains Trust" and "Monitor", which were way above the "normal" person. The TV started at five o'clock and finished around ten o'clock, by which time everybody was supposed to be in bed. Lord Reith's influence still existed. Therefore the Whist Drive was crucial in village community life, and the great and the good were regulars at these events. The village minister was in attendance to open it officially, usually with a short prayer at Kirk whists – and also to be seen, so that disputes were sorted in a civilised way – or so I assumed! Such was the mystery of Whist Drives to a young man!

I first encountered this social whirl when I was about 12. I found myself "volunteered" by my mother to complete a set of four, as somebody had fallen ill and couldn't attend.

In those times, which seem so long ago now, people actually played cards with cards – no mobile phones to interrupt proceedings – and everybody played a form of whist, which was a hundred miles from the real thing!

Suitably dressed in my Sunday best and with my hair Brylcreemed, I ventured into the unknown.

I was, by some distance, the youngest on show that night. My hostess was very kind and explained to me the basic rules and to beware of Miss Adams, who was an avid whist player and was not known to suffer fools gladly. Trumps were selected by a flick-over affair and we set off to explore the mysteries of “proper” whist. Two people of the four rotated clockwise round the room, the other two rotated anticlockwise, a game was played and the number of "sets" was counted and agreed. My scores were pathetically small!

I noticed that the aforementioned Miss Adams was, unfortunately, heading towards me and I began to fear the time when i would be with her at a table.

However, it came to half-time and a break for refreshments, in the nick of time for me!

It was then i was introduced to Sutherlands Beef Paste and also "pan" bread. Normally at home we ate plain bread, the thick stuff with a handsome crust at each end, not the stuff of pretty sandwiches.

The provision of refreshments was always competitive. After all, the hostesses would have to find more people when the next whist came round. The last thing they needed was a bad report in the village for the quality of the refreshments. The more wealthy the hostess, the better was her offering. Some tables, not mine, had biscuits wrapped in paper! A real treat in those times.

I loved the paste sandwiches! The smell and the taste are with me still. There was then a Chocolate Digestive to finish off and gallons of tea provided by the Committee. I was going to need feeding up before facing the forbidding presence of Miss Adams.

The second half restarted and off we went again, after suitably thanking our hostess. I didn't know Miss Adams well – she came from the opposite end of the village – but her reputation was of a strict and stern lady, a formidable lady, who treated young people with the disdain they deserved – and I was about to encounter her. Face to face! I think my nervousness showed. I played worse than ever. Inevitably Miss Adams and her partner won by a country mile.

Surprisingly I discovered that she was a very kind lady who was sympathetic to me, gave out words of encouragement and stressed that I had to attend in future and I would get better! I suppose my relief and pleasure at those words was obvious. Miss Adams came up trumps, in the real sense of the word. Later in life I got to know her much better and her wicked sense of humour and fun made her a joy to know.

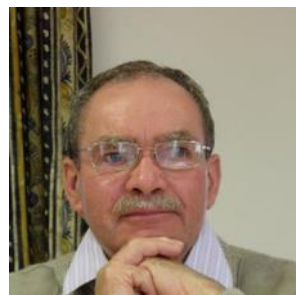
The rest of the night went on and I did get better. Strangely I loved the whole experience, and people were invariably kind and encouraging. A fun night was had by all, but the best of it was the Sutherlands Beef Paste sandwiches!

I suppose the reduction in whist drives has led to the decline in the demand for meat paste, and the posher end of the market has gone on to paté and sundry other more exotic items. Time to remarket "Sutherlands Meat Paste", or alternatively increase the number of whist drives!

It was certainly better than sitting at home watching "The Brains Trust"!!

Sandy

Gardening with George – *More plant wisdom from George, horticulturist and star of the small screen.*



I think that it is safe to say we have ‘enjoyed’ a mixed summer. Hot and dry in June, cool and damp in July and decidedly mixed in August and September. However the temperatures both during the day and at night are lower than they previously were back when the sun shone and was ‘splitting the pavements’.

Provided they are supplied with ample water, plants enjoy and thrive during warm spells. Tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbages and French and runner beans have done well at the allotment when water was applied. This year I also planted some sweet potatoes, just to try out the climate of ‘Sunny Joppa’. Covered with a sheet of polythene to keep the humidity high around the plants, they have thrived in the bright sunshine but the success or failure of my experimental planting will be revealed later in October when it is time to lift and harvest the tubers. When I investigated them last week the tubers were the size of one’s little finger so they have some way to go yet. The grandchildren harvested and enjoyed the garden peas and developed a taste for broad beans after the head gardener demonstrated how to double pod them.



I lifted the potatoes last week and was amazed at how dry the soil still remains even after the odd heavy showers we have experienced of late. I think it will take some time before the soil is thoroughly wetted once again. In anticipation of the coming autumn rains, I have sown some red clover as a green manure crop. The seed is already starting to germinate, thanks to the warmth in the soil and the occasional shower. It will be allowed to grow over winter and then be dug into the earth come the

spring, to add some extra nutrients and fibre to my light sandy soil.

In the cold glasshouse the tomatoes and cucumbers have given us lots of salad ingredients and the three plants of aubergine have produced well too. Soon however they will have finished cropping and will be removed and recycled via the compost heap. Such is the cycle of the seasons.

The bedding plants bought and planted out into large pots continue to flower with great abundance and will continue to do so until the first frosts render them limp and helpless. We have enjoyed their cheeriness just as much as they have enjoyed the sunshine, water and nutrients that the head gardener has lavished upon them.

All in all, it has been a productive and successful gardening season. Soon it will be time to plant spring bulbs, look through seed catalogues and start planning for next year. Gardening is a journey of faith, hope and love.

Wherever you garden –

keep smiling and enjoy your space.

George



E Pachas

(E for Edinburgh, Pachas - abbreviation for Pachamamas)

There is a small local group of people who make pads for refugees as their contribution to The Pachamama Project which works at alleviating period poverty. You may be able to help if you have any fabric (darker colours, no animals – preferably cotton but poly cotton is OK). Perhaps you have used but still good duvet covers or sheets which need a new home?

Please leave on top of the recycling unit.

And sincere thanks indeed for the ongoing support from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Thank you. **Kay**

CrossReach Christmas cards

We all like to be organised, and one way to achieve this is to order your Christmas cards (and calendars, Advent calendars, wrapping paper etc – also e-cards) early from CrossReach, the social work arm of the Church of Scotland.



The CrossReach website tells me, as I type, that there are 94 days, 4 hours, 27 minutes and 3 seconds till Christmas Day... and time is ticking.

It's a very good cause and you can read all about it at shop.crossreach.org.uk

Brain-teaser



How carefully do you read the church magazine? Just as some TV programmes are known by acronyms – such as *Have I Got News For You?* (or *HIGNFY*) - I've decided to think about a regular feature in *Soundings* whose acronym would be *GTKY*.

What is this feature? Here are some clues.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| G - - - - - | Rhymes with a word meaning allowing |
| T - | Sounds the same as a number |
| K - - - | The k is silent |
| Y - - | Rhymes with a female sheep |

In case you need further clues, the words are – in anagram form:

EGG TINT
OT
WONK
OUY

And if you still haven't got it – you need to read the magazine with more attention!

Alison



Getting to know you



— **Christine.** Christine says: I was born in the south of England at the end of World

War II. My English mother was living with her parents, as my father was still in the army. When he was demobbed, we moved to his home town of Dumfries. My father was the treasurer of St Mary's Church and also a Sunday School Superintendent. I lived there, went to school there and then went to St Andrew's University, followed by a year at Moray House, Edinburgh. Once qualified, I moved to the south of England to be near my fiancé. After marriage we moved to Aberdeen and then to Stonehaven. I came to Edinburgh in 2009 when my daughter married and then a grandchild was born!

Q. What is a favourite hymn, and why?

A. *The Lord's My Shepherd to the tune of Brother James' Air. It was played at my wedding.*

Q. What's your earliest church memory?

A. *One of them is sitting in the gallery watching the male elders in their black suits serving communion.*

Q. What was your job and in an alternative life, what job might you have chosen?

A. *I was a Primary School teacher for five years. Then I left to have my children. When I returned to work, I was an occupational therapy assistant, working part-time at the local hospital. I was happy in both my jobs.*

Q. What are you reading at the moment?

A. *I'm reading The Yorkshire Shepherdess by Amanda Owen*

Q. What is your most prized possession?

A. *That would be my family photographs and also some family war medals.*

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

A. I am a Queen of the South supporter. (The only football team mentioned in the Bible – Luke 11, verse 31 in the King James version!)

Q. What luxury would you take to a desert island?

A. A bottle of wine – or even a case!

Q. Where would you go in a time machine and why?

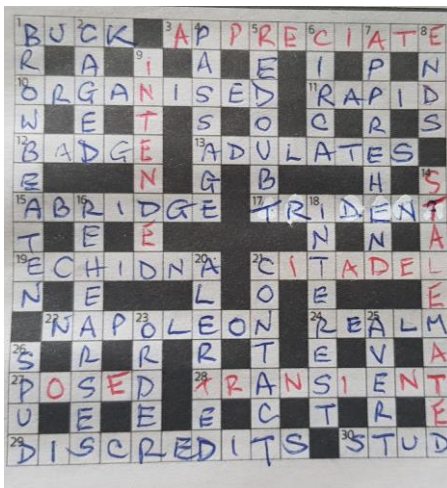
A. I would return to the Victorian era for a short time. It would be interesting to see everything developing.

Q. What single thing might improve your everyday life?

A. A greater understanding of computers.

Q. What do you do to relax?

A. I enjoy doing crossword puzzles and Sudoku.



LIFE AND WORK OCTOBER 2023



Tax and Justice On a milestone anniversary for income tax, looking at what the Church has to say on the relationship between faith, money and justice.

A Living Language How the Church of Scotland is keeping Gaelic alive in worship

'Words need translation, love does not' A pioneering Scripture Union camp for Ukrainian families in Scotland

Making Ends Meet The work of Community Pantries in local churches

'As a witness, it's traumatic' Church volunteers working with refugees arriving in Italy

View from the Pulpit The Rev Rosie Frew on the influence of pilgrimage and walking outdoors

Regulars

- The Rev Roddy Hamilton on worship
- The Rev Dr Martin Johnstone on leadership
- The Very Rev Albert Bogle on digital church
- Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer
- Bible Study by Ruth Harvey

Plus: official updates from the Assembly Trustees and Faith Action Programme, readers' pictures, news, letters, reviews and puzzles – all for £3.50. Visit www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe or speak to your church's Life and Work co-ordinator.

Baptism

17 September Arwen Elizabeth, daughter of Kayrin and Jonathan - who also joined the church.



MAGAZINE/DIARY DEADLINES

November 2023

December 2023/January 2024

February 2024

Sunday 22nd October 2023

Sunday 19th November 2023

Sunday 20th January 2024

Scottish Charity Number : SCO11728

Portobello & Joppa



Parish Church

Photography by Kim Kjaerside

