

# Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish  
Church Magazine

April 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 (10.30am in July and August).**

## ***From the editor***

I recently bought a bound volume of “Good Housekeeping” from May to September 1925 and was interested to find the following advertisement for bath salts:



*Cyclax Violet Ray Reducing Salts is the health-with-pleasure way of reducing superfluous flesh. As you recline at luxurious ease in your bath, these salts reduce your weight **through the pores of your skin**. No fatiguing exercises, no dieting and no internal drugs.*

And in case we're worried that a thin person who used these bath salts might melt entirely away, we're reassured: *These absolutely non-injurious salts can only reduce **superfluous** flesh.*

Unfortunately, this wonderful product doesn't seem to be available these days.

If only life were that simple.

In this edition of “Soundings”, Stewart draws our attention to the complexities of our world and gives us something to hold on to in these very troubled times.

There's focus on the young: the holiday club, Mary's Meals and baby singing and signing. There's an article from the (more mature) Guild, and food for thought about all-age services. And there's news from the wider church, which does a lot of good for those who're finding life a struggle; as well as the usual features and, cheerily, some words about spring.

**P Donaldson**

## ***From the minister***



Dear Friends and Neighbours,

Yesterday, we hosted Towerbank Primary School at the church for their Easter Service. They recently have been offering a part of the curriculum which encourages the children to remember how important it is to treat everyone with kindness no matter their educational achievements, their skin colour, their religion or the type of family they come from. The teachers were particularly proud of one student they thought would never speak in public: for the first time he stood up and spoke. Their pride and his pride was palpable.

Last night, I attended a Tenebrae Service at St. Mark's. It is a service of 'shadows' and it was powerful indeed. At the end, as a number of passages were read that described a shadow of Holy Week (shadow of betrayal, of desertion, etc.), a candle was put out. We then exited quietly in the dark. Hugely powerful and reflective, it was a service offered as a gift from other churches.

This morning Lourens provided a lovely communion service at 8am as part of Maundy Thursday. Quiet, simple, thoughtful. Thinking about Peter's betrayal and the ways that we can betray Jesus, albeit perhaps in a less dramatic manner. By allowing anger to overtake us, by hiding our Christian faith under the bushel, by not centring our life on Christ. Afterwards, I had an excellent conversation with someone about the most recent events in Brussels and the tendency to simplify explanations that are inevitably extremely complex.

Sometimes the world seems so very complex indeed and sometimes it seems that the centre does not hold. Sometimes it seems that all is difference and that there is so little that can be held on to.

When I spoke with Towerbank, I ended with a quote by Martin Luther King. He once said (and I've mentioned this in church) that we can't all be saints but we

can all be servants. We can all be kind, we can all love and we can all strive to follow the man who taught us that in God's love there is no male or female, servant or rich man, old or young. In love, they are all one and all together.

Few local families attend churches these days but a reference to the unifying character of this type of love seemed to resonate. It made sense. It is undoubtedly something to hold on to.

Christ's love was challenging, comforting, healing, testing, sacrificial. Christ's love draws all people unto those who truly love.

In all the differences there is unity....or at least the possibility thereof.

Let us in our living, our working, our speaking, our praying strive to draw people together in precisely the love that remains with us through this Easter season, a love that has been with humanity through the millennia since that first Easter morning.

**Stewart**

*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."*

***Martin Luther King Junior, A Testament of Hope: the Essential Writings and Speeches***

## ***All-Age Worship Thoughts***

Currently we have all-age worship services four times a year – Harvest, Nativity, Palm Sunday and Promotion Sunday. The All-Age Worship Planning Team meet to plan and prepare these services and as we are now approaching two years of having these worship services, we would like to start thinking back on what's been done and how we might improve on these services in the future. Our aim is to make the worship experience as all-age as possible – meaning that the worship is not geared just towards children or that the children are not just added into our usual Sunday morning worship. Instead we want to create something different that reaches everyone – that is truly ALL-age.

We would love to hear your thoughts on this. As the Palm Sunday has just happened, an all-age worship service will be fresh in your minds. Please would you take a moment and think about what you liked about the worship and what you didn't? What might you suggest we try in the future? Stewart is organising an online survey you could fill in (details to follow in the order of service) or if you would prefer to speak to someone directly, then please speak to a member of our team. If you would like to join the planning team, we are very happy to include more volunteers and perspectives. Thanks!



## ***Portobello Holiday Club 2016 – Guardians of Ancora***



Our second Portobello Holiday Club will take place on 25-29 July from 9am to 12:45pm here at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church. Seven local churches are working together to bring a fun-filled week of games, crafts, gardening, Bible study, music and much more for children going into P1-P7. We have a crèche and nursery group available for volunteers' children and we are inviting secondary students to be involved as youth helpers. It will be a wonderful week and we would love for your family to be there. Registration information and flyers will be out to the local schools and churches in May, but for now – save the dates!

### ***The main kitchen***

Some of you may have noticed a new piece of equipment in the main kitchen: a commercial dishwasher. Once the water in the machine has reached the required temperature, a cycle will be completed in approximately 3 - 4 minutes. Very little, if any, drying is necessary as the dishes are washed at a high temperature. This should certainly speed things up for all those who are involved in washing up duties. The cost was covered by the donations you kindly leave for teas and coffees on a Sunday morning. Thank you very much.

### **S Binnie**



## The Guild



The current session of the Portobello and Joppa Guild is coming to an end with a visit to the Kelpies on the 19<sup>th</sup> April.

We have 75 members on the Roll and an average of 50 ladies attending each meeting. We have enjoyed fellowship together and been entertained, informed and inspired over the last six months.

We would like to thank everyone who supported the daffodil coffee morning on 5th March when we were delighted to raise £839. This fundraiser, together with our Table Top Sale in November, enabled us to give £1200 to the chosen Guild Projects, namely 'Street Pastors' and 'Caring for Mother Earth in Bolivia'. We were also able to give £200 to the Outreach Committee for their work with Bethany, £100 to the Foodbank, £100 to Portobello Older People's Project, £100 to the Sunday Stars and £100 to the Grassmarket Project as well as providing £500 to the church for heating and lighting.

We will reconvene towards the end of September and extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us.

**W Davis**, President



*A mother was making pancakes for her two small boys. They began to argue as to who would get the first one. "Now, now," said their mother. "If Jesus was here, he'd say, 'Let my brother be first'."*

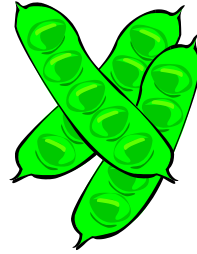
*The older boy promptly turned to the younger and said, "Jack, you can be Jesus."*



## ***When you plan your garden this spring***

Plant three rows of peas:

Peace of mind,  
Peace of heart,  
Peace of soul.



Plant four rows of squash:

Squash gossip,  
Squash indifference,  
Squash grumbling,  
Squash selfishness.

Plant four rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful,  
Lettuce be kind,  
Lettuce be happy,  
Lettuce really love one another.

No garden should be without turnips:

Turnip for service when needed,  
Turnip to help one another,  
Turnip the music and dance.

Water freely with patience and  
Cultivate with love.

There is much fruit in your garden  
Because you reap what you sow.

To conclude, in our garden

We must have thyme:

Thyme for fun,  
Thyme for rest,  
Thyme for ourselves.

(Contributed by **L Veitch**)



## **GRATITUDE**

I would like to say thank you to all our friends who sent cards, wrote, phoned, visited or prayed for us during and after Andrew's brief illness or came to his funeral after his death.

I can't tell how much the love, support and prayers helped us both through this traumatic time. I feel truly blessed as I know Andrew did too.

Our years in Portobello were for both of us some of the happiest in our lives.

Thank you,  
**Jeanie**

PS And Bumble sends greetings.

## ***Mary's Meals***

On 13 March, the Breakfast Club and Sunday Stars hosted a porridge breakfast fundraiser between the 9:30am and 11am worship services. This between-services social was an opportunity for people who attend our two church services to catch up with each other and also enjoy breakfast and tea and coffee for a great cause. In total, we raised around £290, which will go towards feeding children at schools in impoverished areas of the world through the Mary's Meals organisation. Our thanks to everyone who helped and those who donated generously. Thanks especially to our cook, Linda!





## **A call to prayer**

### **LIVING EXPECTANTLY!**

*“Let us hold firmly to ... hope ... because we can trust God to do what He promised.” (Hebrew Ch 10 v 23 NCV)*

Look around us: so many of the people we know live without hope. They smile, but their eyes are dead; they talk, but the music has left their voice. They're like mannequins, all dressed up and going nowhere – they feel hopeless.

Our hope isn't luck, like winning the lottery. No, it's *expectancy*; it's *confidence* that God will do what He's promised. Listen: “Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps His Word.” (Hebrews Ch 10 v 23 TM). What keeps us going? “God's promises!” Nobody knew this better than David; he'd every reason to lose hope. After God anointed Him to be king, he waited seven more years while a paranoid leader occupied the throne. He had to flee for his life and hid in caves surrounded by enemies. He saw Israel devastated by war, his friends killed and his family taken captive. Listen: “My foes taunt me, saying ... ‘Where is your God?’” (Psalm 42 v 10 NIV). Faced with circumstances that would wipe most of us out, David *still* said, “You are my hope” (Psalm 71 v 5 NKJV); “I hope in Your Word” (Psalm 119 v 147 NKJV). We can't lose with an attitude like that. David became Israel's greatest king because he never lost his confidence in God: it kept him focused; it kept him on top of the circumstances; it kept him going.

So, “Let us hold firmly to ... hope” (Hebrews Ch 10 v 23 NCV). Why? Because God will keep every promise He's made us.

**H McNulty,**  
Prayer Promoter



**News from CrossReach**, which continues the Church of Scotland's long tradition of providing care and support for the vulnerable.

### ***Heart for Art plans expansion***

CrossReach's Heart for Art service now operates in 7 locations. The most recent class is in Kirk O'Field Centre (part of Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh) and the hope is to launch another two, in Musselburgh and the west of Glasgow, soon. Heart for Art provides a natural, artistic ambiance for people with dementia and their carers, and aims to reduce the public stigma and isolation that a diagnosis of dementia brings. This is achieved by facilitating groups within the community, supported by trained artists, dementia experts and volunteers. This enables strong, emotional connections to take place and promotes inclusion. Heart for Art sessions are free and members are encouraged to take a lead in their own learning, with a constant supply of art materials available.

For more information please e-mail: [heartfor.art@crossreach.org.uk](mailto:heartfor.art@crossreach.org.uk)

### ***Moderator calls for public support for social care organisations***

Speaking at a lunchtime event in the Scottish Parliament, the Moderator of the General Assembly has called for public support for social care organisations such as CrossReach. The Moderator said he had been "overwhelmed by the volume and quality of work delivered by CrossReach to the people of Scotland" but also spoke of the financial difficulties that social care organisations including CrossReach are facing in their attempts to pay the Scottish Living Wage of £8.25 an hour: "If there is a public commitment to the Living Wage – and there must be – there must also be a public commitment to funding it, or vital services will become unsustainable and vulnerable people will suffer." He ended by extending an invitation to MSPs to visit projects in their constituencies.

Watch the Moderator's speech on the CrossReach Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/crossreach1869](https://www.facebook.com/crossreach1869)

## *Sing and sign*

If you walk past PJPC halls on Thursday mornings, particularly if it's a warm day and we have the windows open, you may hear the sound of parents or grandparents, babies and toddlers enriching their communication with baby sign language.... Beautiful sounds of singing, chatter, laughter and peek-a-boo!



I teach Sing and Sign baby signing classes in Edinburgh - all about communication and ultimately encouraging language. Any family with a baby or toddler can benefit from adding some sign language into the communication mix. Using baby signs with my children is one of the things about their babyhood that I remember most fondly and proudly. It enriched our interactions and allowed my boys to participate in 'conversations' using signs a long time before their spoken language enabled them to do so with words. When I talk to parents, it is often the communication benefits I tend to focus on but it can be easy to forget that there is another magical ingredient of SING and Sign! Music and songs not only help babies' language acquisition but can positively influence their emotional development and shape their outlook on the world.

At the recent Sing and Sign national conference I was lucky enough to meet Dr. Suzanne Zeedyk of "Connected Baby". A renowned research scientist and author, Dr Zeedyk has a particular interest in the science of connection and babies' innate capacity for communication. Her engaging presentation helped us all understand how babies are born hard-wired to seek connection with faces, people, loved-ones from their earliest days. Communication, like music, is about rhythm and interaction. Even the earliest interactions with your child help them learn about conversation, taking turns and reading how the other person is feeling.

Studies (and experience) have shown that music and especially singing has a calming effect on babies, but singing with your child goes even further than that! Enjoying songs and rhymes with your child brings a connection between you, a

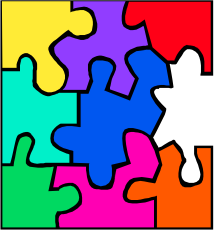
positive interaction, a joyful moment. In your baby's rapidly growing brain there are pathways being laid, synapses being built and the more moments of joy your child experiences, the more likely their brain will become "hard-wired for joy". Over time your interactions with your baby shape your baby's perception of the world or to put it another way – a baby's brain grows based on his or her experiences. Suzanne says;

"When a baby has repeated experiences of being comforted in the face of anxiety, then she develops the capacity to keep herself calm. But learning what comfort is like can only be done with the help of another person, because human brains are so immature at birth."

Singing with babies helps them learn how the world FEELS. Singing, enjoying, connecting with your baby will help your child grow into teens and adults who can regulate their emotions and will help them move through the world from a place of love.

Each part of the Sing and Sign curriculum gives parents plenty of opportunity to connect with and enjoy their child. In our 'Babes' classes, which are suitable for babies up to 6/7 months of age, the focus is solely on that connection. There is no requirement for babies to 'watch' the teacher at the front – the interaction is between parent and baby and the gentle pace of the class gives ample opportunity for parents and babies to enjoy this interaction. Parents are encouraged to take their cue from their little one, be guided by them and what they enjoy from the class. We teach some signs and introduce some of the theory behind baby signing but our ultimate aim is to help parents feel comfortable and confident enjoying songs and rhymes with their tiny baby. We want to help parents realise that many of the things that often come naturally when interacting with their baby are actually laying the foundations for language and emotional acquisition - all through the simple act of connecting with their baby in a relaxed, fun way.

**C Rennie**



## **Brain-teaser**

It's really spring now, so here's a word search involving spring-like words. How many can you find? The words I've included are underneath. The words may be forwards, backwards or diagonally up or down.

S	P	R	I	N	G	A	G	H	L	C	N
U	L	O	D	X	T	H	R	U	S	H	B
N	A	O	V	H	C	N	E	F	V	H	U
S	N	T	X	B	H	D	E	S	F	G	D
H	T	S	G	U	L	K	N	E	S	T	S
I	I	W	S	D	V	O	C	G	H	K	O
N	N	O	Z	S	Z	M	S	G	R	O	W
E	G	L	O	W	I	N	G	S	R	R	I
T	U	L	I	P	L	K	Y	R	O	Q	N
D	B	A	J	W	O	W	K	L	A	M	G
X	Y	W	I	C	B	J	H	R	W	S	L
G	V	S	D	I	G	G	I	N	G	J	S

SPRING, THRUSH, GREEN, NESTS, EGGS, SUNSHINE, PLANTING, GROW, BLOSSOM, GRASS, BUDS, ROOTS, DIGGING, SWALLOW, TULIP, SOWING

**A Marr**



## **Getting to know you...**

This month's interview is with Sarah. Sarah attended St Philip's Sunday School and Youth Fellowship and also enjoyed some time with the Drama group - but now very much prefers being in the audience! She now helps with the Sunday Stars and Messy Church, since having her own children (Emily 12 and Robbie 10) and realising how important the community was to her as a child. She's been a Guidance teacher since 1996, firstly in Preston Lodge and, since 2002, at Lasswade High School in Midlothian.

In her spare time she likes to play bridge and poker and annoy her children by embarrassing them.

**Q. In an alternative life, what job would you have chosen?**

*A. Oscar winning screenwriter - I would just love to go to the Oscars.*



**Q. What book would you recommend?**

*A. Anything by Anne Tyler, especially "Breathing Lessons".*

**Q. What would be your ideal holiday?**

*A. Either the Italian Amalfi coastline or Arran, Heathdale. Cannot quite decide if my family would be with me or not.....probably! :)*

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

*A. America in the 1920s, I studied this era for History at University and loved the Bill Bryson book "One Summer: America 1927".*

**Q. What is a favourite quotation?**

*A. "Only hurt people, hurt people", a quote I never tire of telling my PSE (Personal and Social Education) classes... .*



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

*A. When I was about 10 years old I dressed as a fishwife and sang in a waulking group\* – we competed at the Mod and won the "Shiant shield"! We were also filmed doing said singing at the bottom of Ben Nevis. It was cold!*

**\*Waulking** (in Gaelic luadh) is the technique of finishing the newly-woven tweed by soaking it and thumping it rhythmically to shrink and soften it - all done by hand in the old days. The songs served to keep the rhythm and lighten the work.

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

*A. My radio, so I could hear my podcasts, particularly Wittertainment!*

**Q. What do you do to cheer yourself up?**

*A. Watch old box sets of "LA Law" or "Anne of Green Gables".*

**Q. What kind of music do you listen to?**

*A. I'm not a huge music aficionado, quite old school but do like a female singer, whether it be Ella Fitzgerald, Carole King or Rumor and Jess Glynn (only heard of her thanks to my children!).*



**Q. What do you miss (or not miss) about being a child?**

*A. Playing with Sindy! Loved my Sindy and loved getting excited about Christmas and birthdays.*

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

*A. I enjoy getting up as*

- 1) I love my job and*
- 2) no one else is up, so it's the only time in the day I get peace! (while on a Saturday, "Sound of the 60s" wakes me up...).*

## ***Life and Work – in the April edition***



**Faith and Finance** Should the Church of Scotland divest from fossil fuels? Interview with Charles Munn, elder, economics professor and convener of the Church’s Special Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity. Two ministers reflect on past careers in the banking industry

**The Privilege of Chaplaincy** The Rev Chris Kellock offers an insight into the life of a military chaplain

**Changing Lives** The work of International Justice Mission

**Bridging the Gap** Dr Murdo Macdonald shares stories of church-sponsored projects closing the digital divide

**Creative Theology** Ron Ferguson argues that the Church of Scotland needs both conservatives and liberals

**Unity of Church ‘Of Fundamental Importance’** In his final column, the Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison explains the importance of seeking unity

**A Passion for Justice** Reflecting on a recent trip to Egypt, Hannah Mary Goodlad considers the plight of refugees and the need for tolerance

**Image Over Word** The Rev Alastair Duncan considers the place and power of art in the Church today

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## ***MAGAZINE/DIARY DEADLINES***

May	Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
June/July/August	Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2016
September	Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> August 2016

***Scottish Charity Number : SCO11728***

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Photography by Kim Kjaerside

