

Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

February 2022



Portobello and Joppa Parish Church



From the editor



In his letter, Stewart speaks to us about gifts. We recently had a visit from our four-year-old grand-daughter, and she brought us a gift: a packet of chocolate hearts. She had persuaded her mother, our daughter, to buy them as a present for us.

Then she suggested that she could eat some of them. Gifts are indeed for sharing.

This is a very full edition of “Soundings”! We have information about the forthcoming “rolling” services. You can also read about the future of the church in Edinburgh and beyond – changes are coming. We have news of our young people, from BC 2.0 to Messy and Muddy Churches. You’re asked for help for Edinburgh Direct Aid and Fresh Start – both charities for those in dire need, and very worthy of our contributions.

You can also see our accounts, dutifully prepared by David, to whom many thanks are due.

You can scare yourself by reading more of the exploits of Sandy – he’s had such an exciting life compared to some of us. Well, me anyway.

And then you can read about what Eilidh would take to a desert island – and what she’d do with it when she got there.

And there are the regular features – thanks as ever to those who contribute these.

Pam



From the minister

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

What gifts do you have?

Some of us paint, some cook, some sing, some play music, some garden, some sew, some care, some listen, some support...

The list could go on for a long, long time, especially in the context of a church community. We are generously blessed as a church not only in Portobello but around the city, around the country and around the world.

Which gift is most important? It's almost impossible to choose. To paraphrase Ecclesiastes ('for everything under heaven, there is a time...'), there is a time when one gift is needed, and a time when another gift is needed. There is a time when we need fellowship and conversation and food, and a time when we need discussion and decision, and a time when we need to reflect and care.

At a recent Sunday service, Lourens was thinking about the spiritual gifts as described in 1 Corinthians 12. He then drew an analogy with our five senses. Which is most important? Which is most important to you? Which could you do without?

What is your favourite sense? Which one would you miss the most? Some at the service said hearing: listening to music! Some said taste: food, glorious food! Some said sight: seeing the beauty of the world around us.

And, horror of horrors, when the minister suggested (tongue in cheek?) that he might miss sight the most because he was such a man of vision, there was laughter in the congregation! General guffaws and chortles galore! How could that be? Merriment with (or at?) the minister! Shocking!

The minister later retorted with a line recently read (and adapted): 'visible ambassadors of vision'.

We are called, as followers of Christ, to be the visible ambassadors of vision.

We are called collectively to be Christ's body in the world, his hands and feet serving and healing.

We are called collectively to be the visible ambassadors of vision: Christ's vision of the reign of God, God's vision of a world renewed and recreated in generosity, abundance, grace and love.

It prompted me to think (is the minister being defensive here?).

Vision of what? Vision for what? Vision of whom? Vision for whom?

In the midst of a gruelling few weeks, full of funerals and the pressures of Presbytery planning, the day-to-day task of simply getting through things, a conversation and reflection on vision seemed appropriate. Providential even.

Are we called to create or articulate that vision of God manifested through Christ?

Or are we called to *be* that vision?

1 Corinthians 13 talks about the greatest gift. The gift of love. It is patient, it is kind, it is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude....

God's gift of love is the gift that fulfils and gives life to our other gifts.

It is the gift that gives them substance and grounding and weight and heft and light.

Recognising these gifts, sharing these gifts and, all the while, giving thanks for these gifts is the task of a lifetime.

And perhaps a life full of love, giving love, shining with love, is one of the greatest gifts of all.

In your doing, do with utmost, sacred, sacrificial love. But also simply be. Sit, in love, in Christ, in God.

Whose vision is that?

Stewart

Working with Meadowbank and Willowbrae

Some weeks ago it was reported that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland were asking Presbyteries to deliver mission with a reduced number of ministry posts.

It asked Edinburgh to deliver mission with 48.5 posts, a 40% reduction from 2012. Edinburgh are now united in a new presbytery with West Lothian, who are asked to deliver with 17 posts.

As part of this process, the Edinburgh section of the new Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery produced a consultative document. It offers proposals for the creation of unions within Edinburgh and the establishment of Mission Districts. These latter echo the clusters which had previously begun the necessary discussions.

PJPC had been in a cluster with Bristo Memorial, Duddingston, Richmond Craigmillar and St. Martin's. With the more drastic cuts and changes in this area of the city, it is now proposed that we begin working more closely with Meadowbank and Willowbrae Churches. They are, as it were, placed on the 26 bus route.

Session have had a chance to consider some of the issues that surround this idea. There are some questions to be asked and some challenges too. But there are lots of possibilities as well. Both churches have experienced a great deal of change, as has PJPC, and there is a lot of energy and excitement and creativity in all that they have done.

So, keep your eyes and ears open as things progress. If you have any questions, feel free to speak to Stewart.

Rolling Sunday worship at PJPC

It's hard to believe that we are approaching the two-year anniversary of going into lockdown. What a dreadful time this has been for so many as we have had to adapt to this invisible enemy. We can at least take some comfort in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and I am delighted to be able to inform you that PJPC will be trialling a new Sunday worship programme from 6 February. This programme has been designed and developed based on feedback given by members and elders last autumn. It features three periods of worship between 9.30am and 11.45am; children's and youth ministry; a creche and a rolling café where you can meet up and chat with friends and fellow worshippers. See the image on the next page for a picture of what we've planned!

Why don't you come along one Sunday in February to experience it for yourself?


Michael

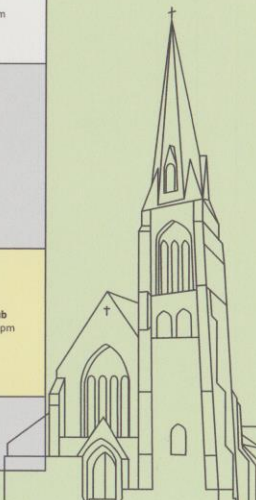
Session Clerk



ROLLING SUNDAYS

AT PORTOBELLO & JOPPA PARISH CHURCH, FEBRUARY - APRIL 2022

	SANCTUARY	MAIN HALL (AREA 1)	MAIN HALL (AREA 2)	SESSION ROOM	
9:30-9:45	Quiet reflective time of worship 9:30 - 10:00am		Sunday Stars 9:30 - 10:00am	Creche 9:30 - 10:15am	
9:45-10:00					
10:00-10:15					
10:15-10:30	Interactive, intergenerational time of worship 10:15 - 10:45am				
10:30-10:45					
10:45-11:00					
11:00-11:15	Opportunity for further worship, including deeper reflection, and discipleship 11:00 - 11:45am	 Rolling Cafe 9:30am - 12:30pm			
11:15-10:30					
11:30-11:45					
11:45-12:00			Breakfast Club 11:30am - 12:30pm		
12:00-12:15					
12:15-12:30	Choir practice 12:15 - 13:00pm				
12:30-12:45					
12:45-13:00					



A Hybrid BC 2.0

In November, Breakfast Club 2.0 met up for a climate justice Bible study and time to catch up with each other over pizza. This could seem like a usual small group time; however, it was quite different than how we've met for BC 2.0 before. Half of the group was in-person in Edinburgh, and the other half met with us virtually through Zoom. With one young person at university in Leeds, one in Dundee and two meeting together in Glasgow to Zoom in, we managed to have four Zoom screen locations up with seven young people and three leaders gathering in a hybrid way.



It wasn't nearly the same as all being physically together in the same location, but it was much better than all being apart on Zoom screens only. We had a fantastic discussion on climate justice and heard the highs and lows of each other's lives and prayed for one another.

The group has decided to continue meeting once a month as a hybrid of in-person and online. The students studying at Glasgow University will meet up in person at the same time the group of young people and leaders will meet in-person in Edinburgh. We'll Zoom together – the two city groups along with one student up in Dundee and one student down in Leeds. This way we can have some connection in-person whilst keeping our spread-out wider group connected across the UK throughout the year.

We'll be meeting together one night a month from 7pm-8:30pm starting up again in January. If you know a young person aged 16-25 years old who might like to take part, contact Michelle for more information.

Michelle

Messy Church Meets Again!



On 27 November, Messy Church at PJPC met in-person for the first time in 21 months. There were a couple of adaptations to the original MC to put in place Covid mitigations to meet safely, but that did not take away the joy to once again be together in the church. We saw families returning to church who we had only seen when dropping off Messy Church bags through lockdown. There was excitement to hear stories, craft, wear nativity costumes and catch up over dinner.

Eleven families gathered with our volunteer team to begin the journey to Bethlehem at the start of Advent. Together we created a bulletin board display for the main hall – a mosaic collage image of Mary and Joseph

traveling with the donkey. Each table of two households created a rectangle of our mosaic. From eight tables, our one image was made. There is something in this – for nearly two years we have been a separated Messy Church, doing our own things in our own homes. However, when we bring our unique selves back to the church building, something beautiful has been created by our Messy Church family. This Advent, our Messy Church team is very thankful to have returned to the church building and to have been reunited with our Messy Church family.

We will be back for Messy Church on the last Saturday of each month from 29 January from 3:30pm-5:30pm. Keep any eye on emails or Facebook to book in with Eventbrite as spaces are limited to fifty people, which is our hall capacity for social distancing. It is an intergenerational gathering, and you do not need to bring children with you to come along. However, children do need to bring an adult with them. All are welcome.

One thing I learned from watching chimpanzees with their infants is that childhood should be fun. Jane Goodall

The best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want to do and then advise them to do it. Harry S Truman

There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way they treat their children. Nelson Mandela

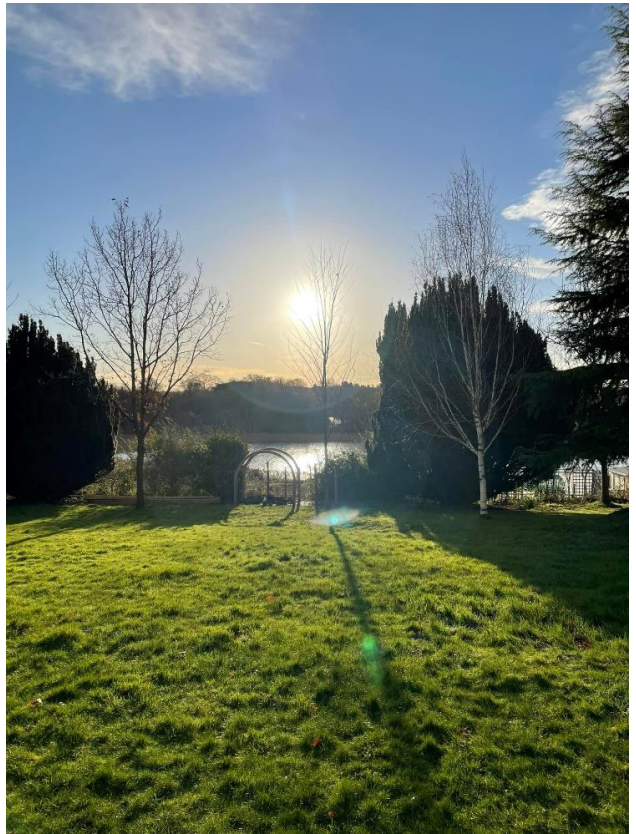
One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world. Malala Yousafzai

A child is a curly, dimpled lunatic. Ralph Waldo Emerson

Muddy Church

Our Muddy Church has been meeting since July at Duddington Kirk Gardens on the first Saturday of each month from 11am-12:30pm. Our team of volunteers from PJPC works with some of the staff at Duddington Kirk to put together this outside worship time each month. We meet rain or shine, snow or warm weather.

We did wonder how strongly we'd stick to this plan when the weather turned colder, but in December we still had a fantastic time gathering as snowy sleet fell around us. We met to think about the journey to Bethlehem with a nativity search around the café area, making some bird feeders for the winter months, and then toasting apples over a campfire whilst drinking hot chocolate and sharing the Christmas story together. It was a small group, but it was a wonderful way to start the Advent season.





Muddy Church is a deliberate setting of time aside to be open to awe and wonder outside. To connect to the world around us and to connect with God. We do this together and all are welcome (from the very youngest to the very oldest). We meet at 11am on the first Saturday of most months on the lawn of Duddingston Kirk Gardens and get to explore Dr Neil's gardens and the glebe lands near the lake. We end at 12:30pm with a Bible story and a time to reflect through an interactive prayer.

Speak to **Michelle or Reuben** to find out more.

Please register in advance if you are able - but if you forget to register, do still turn up and just sign in when you arrive for track and trace. Our next Muddy Church is 5 March.

2022 – Fresh Start

Yes, a new year is a fresh start for all of us. When pandemic restrictions are finally lifted it will feel even more so. For many less fortunate people this new beginning comes at any time of the year. If you are

relatively new to Edinburgh, FRESH START is an Edinburgh based charity that helps people who have been homeless make a home for themselves.



Our congregation has supported FRESH START for several years and grateful thanks are due to Winnie Davis, who, with the support of her husband, Hunter, has acted as co-ordinator within our church fellowship. She has now handed over the reins and I know you will continue to support this valued organisation.

One of the most helpful ways we contribute is with the provision of essential household items, such as pots, pans, crockery and bedding for their Starter Packs. (Please note – NO used duvets). Please pass on the word to your friends, neighbours and relatives. Items can be left in the Flower Room (on the left as you enter the church building) or you may wish to telephone or email if you need assistance.

You may wonder about cookers, washing machines etc. FRESH START uses funds raised to purchase, deliver and install white goods on their clients' behalf. If you wish to make a donation at any time you could telephone FRESH START on 0131 476 7741 or email: admin@freshstartweb.org.uk.

Social media: FRESH START can be found on facebook at www.facebook.com/fresh.start.edinburgh/

Twitter: @FreshStartWeb.

I have agreed to act as the contact person but will have the active support of Avril.



Kay

Remembering

21 Nov.	Joyce Young of Portobello
21 Nov.	Eric Middlemiss of Joppa
24 Nov.	Christina Curtis of Portobello
2 Dec.	Dennis Youngs of Magdalene
6 Dec.	Barry Sinclair of Portobello
8 Dec.	Bob Aitken of Joppa
9 Dec.	Stuart Hope of Portobello
10 Dec.	Richard Doak of Joppa
14 Dec.	Brian Pardoe of Portobello
14 Dec.	Brian Moar of Joppa
15 Dec.	Ian Mackie of Craiginny
22 Dec.	Liz Laidlaw of Craiginny
31 Dec.	Anne Lawson of Clermiston
1 Jan.	Ken Steven of Musselburgh
13 Jan.	Rena Forrest of Joppa
20 Jan.	Alexander Johnston of Joppa
21 Jan.	Jim Wood of Portobello



From Brian Moar's Family

Words fail to adequately express our thanks for the abundant numbers of cards, letters, flowers, gifts, emails, telephone calls and pavement chats of support and sympathy following the loss of our beloved Brian. We have been overwhelmed by the love and kindness shown to us all by our church family, friends and neighbours.

Our thanks are extended to everyone who attended the Thanksgiving Service, within the COVID guidelines as well as those joining us in the livestreaming at home and throughout the world irrespective of the time zones! It is so comforting to know our "smiley boy" was held in such high regard by all who had the pleasure to be in his company.

Thank you, God bless you all and keep you safe.

Portobello and Joppa Parish Church

For the Period To 31 December 2021

	<u>2021(£)</u>	<u>2020(£)</u>
Congregational Fund		
Income	188,872	200,527
Expenditure	<u>(201,106)</u>	<u>(222,617)</u>
Net Expenditure	(12,234)	(22,090)
Drawdown From General Trustees	22,890	27,480
Fundraising in support of Growing Young	<u>14,155</u>	<u>250</u>
Income	<u>24,811</u>	<u>5,640</u>
Legacies Received	<u>6,332</u>	<u>2,000</u>

All Legacies are invested with the Church of Scotland Investors Trust.

Fabric Fund

Income	27,525	28,043
Expenditure	<u>(13,511)</u>	<u>(19,451)</u>
Net Income	14,014	8,592
Drawdown From General Trustees	0	0
National Giving Day	<u>2,077</u>	<u>0</u>
Income	<u>16,091</u>	<u>8,592</u>

Ministry & Mission

Ministry & Mission Allocation	128,812	146,482
Stipend Fund Allowance	<u>(14,374)</u>	<u>(27,475)</u>
Net payable by Congregational Fund	<u>114,438</u>	<u>119,007</u>

David

Treasurer

If you have any questions, please email David.

WINTER FUEL APPEAL



Imagine you're living in a flimsy tent at the height of Ben Nevis with a baby, three other children and your mother. The temperature outside your tent is below zero. You can't afford the diesel to light your one small stove, as the price is 20 times more than it was a year ago. You're afraid that your mother and your baby won't survive the winter.

This is the situation this winter facing many thousands of refugees who fled from war and persecution in Syria years ago, and are now living in Aarsal, high in the Lebanese mountains.

To help us buy & distribute fuel to get them through the winter, please donate what you can:

- online at www.edinburghdirectaid.org
- by cheque to Edinburgh Direct Aid, 29 Starbank Rd, Edinburgh EH5 3BY
- or by phoning 0131 552 1545

Thank you!



A Call to Prayer

Most of the time we don't know what problems people are dealing with or what they're going through. So if we're praying for someone else, we could follow Paul's example when he asked God to give Timothy three things: grace, mercy and peace.

In the Bible, grace implies two things – first, God's unmerited favour, and second, the ability to handle anything we're facing. "God, who gives all grace, will make everything right. He will make you strong... support you and keep you from falling." (1 Peter 5,10.)

As for mercy – "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Your faithfulness." (Lamentations, 3, 22-23.)

The peace God gives us can sustain us through the worst of circumstances. It's different from the peace the world offers. At best, the world offers temporary relief. But "the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4, 7.)

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Gardening with George - More plant lore
from George – elder, horticulturist and star of the small
screen.



There are a few snowdrops out in the garden now. These are the flowers of hope, the first true sign of the coming of spring and are brave indeed, finding the courage to push up through often frozen soil to bring cheer to us human onlookers. Thought by many to have been introduced to Britain during Roman times, the main concentration of wild species occurs around the eastern end of the Mediterranean and Crimea but due to human intervention have become widespread throughout Europe and beyond.



There are many avid collectors of snowdrops, (Galanthophiles) who are given to collect as many different forms of these simple little flowers as possible. On close examination, snowdrop flowers come in various shapes and forms from simple single flowers to those with multiple petals, those with puckered petals, yellow ovaries or sweet scents. But to me

there is nothing more uplifting and pleasing to the eye than the massed ranks of these simple, nodding, white raindrop-shaped flowers fluttering in the breeze below deciduous trees.

Snowdrops are rarely eaten by anything. They may experience the occasional nibble by a passing slug or snail but remain unharmed by squirrels, badgers and mice.

Not so crocus. The earliest of the crocus will soon be making their appearance if they have avoided the predations of mice. It is interesting how mice prefer the yellow flowered crocus, the flowers of which are also often selectively attacked by the humble but cheeky House Sparrow. Both crocus and snowdrops provide early nectar and pollen for bees.



In the gravel garden at the front of the house the first of the Winter Aconites has raised its head. With bright yellow petals with a ring of shining green leaves just below the flower, this member of the buttercup family is a welcome sign that spring is on the

way. Soon the early Iris will be in flower and then daffodils, tulips and hyacinths. So much to look forward to as the days lengthen and the temperatures rise (hopefully).

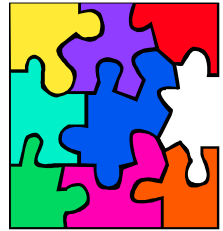
We planted a number of pots of bulbs last September and already there are signs of new growth as the green leaves push their way up into the daylight.

Spring is a time of new beginnings. Happy New Year and Happy Gardening

George

Brain teaser – A quiz about February

Do you know the answers to these questions? Answer TRUE or FALSE.



1. At one time, February was the last month of the year. TRUE OR FALSE?
2. The word February is derived from a Latin word. TRUE OR FALSE?
3. The name “February” implies “beginnings”. TRUE OR FALSE?
4. The birthstone for February is the garnet. TRUE OR FALSE?
5. 1900 was a leap year. TRUE OR FALSE?
6. February 2nd is Michaelmas Day. TRUE OR FALSE?
7. Superman was (allegedly) born on February 29th. TRUE OR FALSE?
8. Charles Darwin, who was born on 12th February 1809, studied medicine at Edinburgh University.



Answers: 1. True – the Romans added January and February to the end of the year, but they were later put at the beginning. 2. True – Februa was a Roman festival occurring from the 13th to the 15th of this month. 3. False – this festival was about purification, not beginnings. 4. False – it’s the amethyst. 5. False – normally leap years are divisible by 4, but in years ending 00, the first two digits must be divisible by 4. 6. False – it’s Candlemas Day. 7. True (assuming that Superman is real). 8. True – he was born in Shrewsbury but came to Edinburgh to study medicine.

Getting to know you – Eilidh Joan (age 6) – A Sunday Star who LOVES Messy Church, crafts, Fischy Music and drama.



Q. What is a favourite song, and why?

A. *You Are a Star* by Fishy Music and *Hold On To Me* by Lauren Daigle because I just like it!

Q. What is an early church memory?

A. Eating doughnuts off a string at Messy Church.

Q. What job might you like to do?

A. I want to be an architect and an artist.

Q. What are you reading at the moment?

A. *The Return of Zita the Spacegirl* by Ben Hatke.

Q. How did you find lockdown?

A. It was sad and bad because we couldn't go to school and I like school and we couldn't meet each other at Messy Church.

Q. What are you longing to do once Covid is no longer a major problem?

A. Having a big playdate with all my friends.

Q. What is your most prized possession?

A. My Bunny (stuffed animal).

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

A. Some fruit and veggies, but I wouldn't eat the veggies.

Q. What do you do to relax?

A. Dancing and playing.

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

A. To a time when there are unicorns.

Q. What kind of music do you listen to?

A. Fischy Music.

Q. How would you like to be remembered?

A. That I'm a good friend.

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

A. Right now – my chocolate Advent Calendar. [It was December when Eilidh answered these questions.]

Q. Where would you like to be right now?

A. Hawaii.

fischy music

Further (hair-raising) adventures of Sandy

I once worked for a shipping company called the Swedish Orient Line, one of Sweden's most well-known and prestigious shipping companies.



The company traded from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and the Levant. I love that name – “The Levant” – it rings of history and romance; it’s the taste of spices, colour, mystery and excitement. However, due to the crazy wars around the Eastern Mediterranean, our company’s ships were split into two groups. One traded with Israel and the North Mediterranean, and others to the Muslim countries but also the European countries in the Mediterranean. I was on a Muslim trading ship. It was simply not possible to go from Haifa to Beirut!

We loaded up, as usual, around the ports of Norway, Denmark and Sweden, and we were finally topped up in Uddevalla in Sweden with: Danish lager; machine parts and spares for trucks, tractors, cars and all manner of vehicles; matches; milk powder; and all the dairy products of Scandinavia in our fridge space.

The owner of our company was Axel Brostrom, a strong Swedish Christian, who insisted that no ship should sail to Beirut without topping off with charitable goods for the Palestinian refugees, which we carried free of charge.

We carried on the open deck a cargo of chassis of Volvo trucks, destined to become buses in Tunisia, but also two very large Christmas trees for the embassies of Sweden and Denmark in Casablanca in Morocco, our first destination. We made an impressive festive sight as we sailed up the Skagerrak and round Jutland into the North Sea.

However, soon we encountered a very bad storm with strong gale force winds from the north, a direction which creates huge swells around the south North Sea. Because of our deck cargo, which we were in danger of losing, we had to turn and face into the north winds and swell to ride out the storm. It was somewhat uncomfortable. We were not a big ship. The waves broke across the bow sending huge “lumps” of water against the bridge, which also covered our deck cargo with heavy loads of sea water.

I was called to the bridge to see a very scary sight at night. The water must have short-circuited the electrical systems of the trucks, which had their batteries fitted of course. This caused all the lights on the trucks to flash eerily into the darkness of the storm, adding to the spine-chilling tingles of the spray itself.

After two days we were safe to head south-west again for the Dover Strait. However, as is normal with winter and the jet stream, it was not long before the next depression crashed across the Atlantic, and once more, as we tried to round Ushant – the north-west corner of France – we had to turn for shelter at Lyme Bay off Dorset on the other side of the channel. Not good, and our schedule was by now becoming somewhat in danger of going into the next year, never mind Christmas!

After the storm abated, we headed south once more and had another bashing going across Biscay, but not enough to stop us – just more delay.

I love to look at the sky once a bad storm has passed. I call it a “wind-washed sky”. It always looks as if it’s apologising for bad behaviour. It’s clean, and the light is just different, presumably with the moisture retained in the air. Or is it just relief that we have come through it again?

When we eventually arrived off Casablanca we were just three days before Christmas Day. I contacted Casablanca Port to be told we had missed our berth and we would have to anchor off the port for a week!

A quick consultation with the captain resulted in me being told to contact the Swedish Embassy and our company back in Gothenburg to see what could be done. The power of the Embassy was enough! I got a call to say we were berthing immediately and the pilot would be with us soon. You cannot have Christmas, even in an Embassy, without a tree!

Our berth was getting a huge amount of construction work. It was an open building site, and health and safety measures were not yet invented, at least not in Casablanca. On Christmas morning, in fresh white uniform, I went down to the dockside to get the UK papers, which had arrived with a vendor on a bicycle. I decided that even the Swedes on the ship would enjoy a newspaper to read after a hearty Christmas dinner. As I walked across the building site my attention was attracted by somebody shouting at me from the ship, and I looked across. Bad move! I fell in a very deep hole and smashed my chest and ribs hard against some concrete blocks at the bottom.

An ambulance was called and I ended up in a hospital in Casablanca, and that was where I spent Christmas, Boxing Day and the next day. I was in real pain, with a nurse whose somewhat heavy-handed approach to pain relief meant I was in fear of her arrival! I was strapped up, and breathing was very painful – some Christmas.

Three days later the Captain arrived to inform me that they would be coming with a taxi to get me back on board. His reasoning was that the ship could not sail without me. They would get me to my cabin and I simply needed to stay there until I felt better. The stewardesses would bring me my meals and visit me regularly to get me drinks and snacks. No problem!

The taxi duly arrived with another containing two burly sailors who half-lifted, half-pushed me to the taxi. There then followed a very painful journey with a typical French Arabic driver who paid no attention at all to bumps, holes, railway lines and corners. Battered and sore, I arrived back at the ship and was then lifted to my cabin on the top deck.

We sailed in lovely weather but with long Atlantic swells from a distant storm, and we rolled from side to side until we got through the Pillars of Hercules into the Mediterranean. Oh, how I loved the sight of Gibraltar!

The voyage continued and just got worse. It was a dreadful winter. We had to go back to sea when our anchors dragged in storms at Tunis, and again at Latakia in Syria.

Two timber ships capsized with the loss of all hands to the north of us and we could do nothing, with a Volvo truck dangerously close to going over the side, having broken her moorings.

As we sailed back to Scandinavia the worst was yet to come. Due to changes in orders and cargo decisions, our engines broke down in a very bad storm off Algeria and we were at the mercy of one of the worst storms seen for years in the Mediterranean. Our cargo shifted and we took a 40-degree list. We expected the ship to right herself. She didn't! Fortunately the engineers had fixed our engine problem just in time, before we were about to ground. We limped back to Aalborg in Denmark, looking somewhat more bedraggled then when we left in our Christmas glory two months earlier.

I had now a growing respect for the real sailors of the sailing ships who had to go through much, much worse without the benefit of engines and all our modern safety standards.

Our next voyage was almost a typical cruise, back to the Levant! Back to Beirut, Alexandria and Tartous. Places of pungent smells and perfumes, of music, noise, hookahs and the muezzin calling the people to prayer with their chants. No bells there! I hope it is still like that, because I loved the Arabic coasts. Great people.

Sandy

LIFE AND WORK – February 2022



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The Five Marks of Mission: Sharing the Good News Thomas Baldwin considers the first of the Five Marks of Mission

Faith in Action Official monthly update from the Faith Action Programme

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March 2022

Sunday 20th February 2022

April 2022

Sunday 20th March 2022

May 2022

Sunday 17th April 2022

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