

Soundings

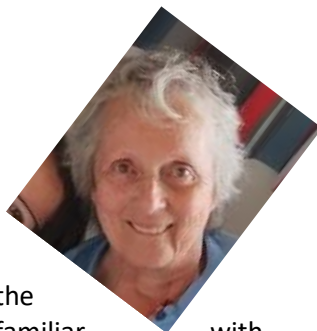
Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

November 2023



From the editor

In his letter this month, Stewart tells us what he's been reading and thus thinking about.



It's just as well that he's the minister, not me, because I'm reading a biography of Agatha Christie, which requires much less brain power and commitment. As for the Bible, I'm often surprised by how much of it I'm not very familiar with, even though I know some of it well. One tends to ignore the less comfortable parts, just as I, anyway, often switch off the more depressing news items (which means, frankly, most of them) because otherwise despair can set in. What can one do, apart from sending money and signing petitions? And praying.

The writer Garrison Keillor recently suggested that as an antidote to awful news we should, as the hymn says, "look around with awesome wonder at the stars, the rolling thunder, the mountain grandeur, forest, brook, birds singing in the trees, feel the greatness of the Creator and be caught up in transcendent beauty and have faith that these troubles shall pass".

And you can read "Soundings", in which you'll find news about a development in our recycling efforts and also a report on the Teapot Trust's Chelsea garden. There's an invitation to the Guild and one to the ASHA curry dinner; information from the Drama Group and the Book Group; and the usual features. These include one in which you can find out who in the congregation has shaken hands with Nelson Mandela. Maybe you could seek her out and shake *her* hand, and then tell your friends and relations that you've shaken the hand that shook Nelson Mandela's?? Then *they* could say that they've shaken the hand that's shaken the hand... etc.

Pam A reminder – the services on Sunday 12 November (Remembrance Sunday) are earlier than usual: 9.15, 10.00 and 10.50.



Dear Friends and Neighbours,

'Death and the Penguin' by Andrey Kurkov.
'Lucky Breaks' by Yevgenia Belorusets.
'The Orphanage' by Serhiy Zhadan.
'A Tale of Love and Darkness' by Amos Oz.
'Enter Ghost' by Isabella Hammad.
'Crime and Punishment' by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

A list of some of the books that I've read in light of recent events.

This list *is* a bit pretentious, I know that. Apologies.

But then again, if there's nothing interesting going on, then, my goodness, those reflections coming out of my mouth would be, er, different than they are at the moment. To quote Haruki Murakami: 'if you read what everyone else is reading, you will think what everyone else is thinking.'

Pretence piles upon pretence, eh?

Oftentimes I read stuff that simply comes into my hands. Especially anything that looks like it will provide a bit of time and space away from the pressures of Presbytery Planning or the commitments of parish ministry.

More recently, however, with events in Ukraine and Gaza, it's become evident how much more I should know about these areas and their people.

Sure, newspapers can be read and websites scrolled and television news viewed or radios tuned in.

These simply left me feeling and thinking that I was still scratching the surface. I could find out what was going on and who thought what and what might happen next.

But what might be going on inside others' heads and minds? What are their experiences like? Where did some of the decisions come from? How might I think, feel and react if exposed to events that I can scarcely imagine?

I recently read an article about deep reading. So many people these days simply whizz through text on their electronic devices and accumulate lots of impressions, emotions, facts and misinformation.

But it is only in deeper reading, perhaps with a book or a lengthy article or collection of essays that we well and truly begin to enter into the lives of others. We may begin to understand more readily how they think and what they think. Nuance can be conveyed in writing that is unavailable in memes or scrolling or visual snippets.

And if there is nuance, we recognise more fully the distinctions in worldviews and opinions that exist within groups of people and oftentimes even within the same person. We can't assume that a particular group of people or subset within a group of people are, in essence, intellectual or emotional clones. We can't assume that every person we read about or hear about or speak with has held the same views forever or will hold them forever or cannot broaden his or her horizon.

Delving into this kind of reading opens up horizons. It grants far greater life and colour and texture to the events that surround us. It suggests that

every person with whom we speak and with whom we come into contact is a world within themselves, with horizons of which we can barely imagine and characteristics we will probably never fully understand.

What does this have to do with the church or our Christian faith or God?

The Bible is central to our faith. It is a book of bewildering complexity, soaring beauty, challenging commands, upsetting imagery and sacred inspiration.

It is a book that defies simple summaries because it is vast in scope and utterly insistent in its purpose: to relate to humans the wonder of God's creative love, the mystery of Christ's eternal grace and the exuberance of that Spirit which presses us always forward in the life of faith. It is a book which spans from those first moments of creation when God said 'let there be light' over the face of the deep to that time when there is the healing of the nations.

A deep reading of such a book might give us a glimpse of that eternal light that came into the world and which the darkness has never overcome.

A deep reading of such a book might give us the inspiration to follow in the path of the one who walked on this earth and is yet, in boundless love, eternal.

A deep reading of such a book might give us the energy, the hope and the spark to serve, to care, to heal.

A deep reading of such a book might give us the ability to love our brothers and sisters here and around the world in a manner described by

Paul ('Love is patient, love is kind...') and manifested by Christ ('love one another as I have loved you...').

That is surely what the world needs right now.

The peace that passes all understanding.

For that we live and for that we pray.

Have a good read.

Stewart

THE GUILD

Please note the change to the advertised syllabus entry for November.

Guild meetings during the winter are **MONTHLY** and on a **TUESDAY** at **2pm!**

TUESDAY 14TH NOVEMBER AT 2PM

Any Questions? Dr Jim Jack of Duddingston Church

TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER AT 2PM

Fun, Food and Fizz

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

WORSHIP



| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sun. 5 Nov. | 9.30am | Quiet and reflective |
| | 10.30am | Informal and interactive |
| | 11.15am | Traditional |
| Sun. 12 Nov. | 9.15 am | Quiet and reflective |
| (Remembrance | 10.00 am | Informal and interactive |
| Sunday) | 10.50 am | Traditional with Two Minute Silence |
| Sun. 19 Nov. | 9.30am | Quiet and reflective |
| | 10.30am | Informal and interactive |
| | 11.15am | Traditional |
| Sun. 26 Nov. | 9.30am | Quiet and reflective |
| (Christ the King | 10.30am | Informal and interactive |
| Sunday) | 11.15am | Traditional |
| (NB December services are still at the planning stage) | | |
| Sun. 3 Dec. | 9.30am | Quiet and reflective |
| (First Sunday of | 10.30am | Informal and interactive |
| Advent) | 11.15am | Traditional with Sacrament of Baptism |

Good news from the recycling hub

Good news! Aldi and Terracycle, working together, have come up with a new programme.

This programme asks that individuals sign up, and receive **two** postpaid labels per month for large envelopes which will hold a maximum of 30 blister packs. These labels come as email attachments.



You cannot get labels at Aldi supermarket, and neither can you take blister packs there for recycling.

Please join in if you have access to a printer and once you have joined, **ADD YOUR NAME TO THE CLIPBOARD LIST** which will soon be at the recycling hub.

At a later date (if all this works!) we may ask to partner you with one or two other people who don't have access to a printer so that you can send the maximum number of packs in each envelope. You may of course invite friends, family members or neighbours to hand in blister packs to you so that you can send, freepost, the maximum of 60 blister packs per month.

Please do not bring bags of blister packs to the Church recycling hub!

Ten Steps:

1. Google “Aldi recycling blister packs”
2. Scroll down to the ALDI site (heading is RECYCLING)
3. Click on ‘Find out more’ under the paragraph headed ‘Terracycle’
4. Click on ‘Sign up and join as a private collector’
5. Fill in details (at ‘Organisation’ scroll down menu and choose ‘Individual’)
6. Click on ‘Next’
7. Complete personal information
8. Click on ‘Create my account’
9. Click on ‘Request shipping labels’
10. Go into your emails – There will probably be two (one for each label), choose download now and then print.

Take note of the date so that you can come back after a month to print the next two labels.

Don’t forget to pass this information on to others, please!

There are flyers available in the hall with the above information.

Thank you – **PJPC RECYCLING TEAM**

ASHA Curry Fundraiser Dinner

On Friday, 17 November, PJPC is co-hosting a curry fundraiser dinner night with Meadowbank and Willowbrae Parish Church to raise money for ASHA. Our dinner will be at Meadowbank Parish Church (83 London Road, EH7 5TT) and it is a great opportunity to support the work of ASHA as we will



hear from Freddy Martin, the Associate Director for ASHA who is visiting the UK along with a graduate named Sumit who is from the slums and will share of his experience being supported on his educational journey through the work of ASHA.

ASHA is an organisation working with people in the slums of Delhi, India. Their mission is to work with the urban poor to help establish long-term transformation to their quality of life. ASHA looks to support holistic community-based healthcare, empowerment, financial inclusion, education and environmental improvements through training, resourcing and encouraging those in the slum communities to strive for their basic human rights.

Doors will open at 6pm with dinner being served from 6:30pm. We will hear from our guests with a presentation at 7pm and then we will finish with dessert and coffee/tea with a finishing time of 8:30pm.

Everyone is invited to join us for this event, though seating capacity is at 80 people so it is a ticketed event. If you would like to reserve tickets, please get in touch as soon as possible by emailing Michelle or speaking to her on a Sunday morning.

The tickets are free, but donations will be taken on the night (so please bring cash).

The Teapot Trust



Back in April we wrote of our upcoming visit to the Chelsea Flower Show, where we would be volunteering for the Teapot Trust, who had won a grant to design and display a garden, and benefit from the opportunity to introduce people to their vital work.

The inspiration for the Elsewhere Garden came about after the designers, East Lothian-based Semple Begg, met with young people who have used the services of the Teapot Trust. The children told of the power of art therapy to take them ‘elsewhere’: away from the pain and stigma of their condition - often hidden disorders such as juvenile arthritis; the fear of hospitals; the fear of needles and yet another round of uncomfortable and painful treatment; and the sense of powerlessness, having large groups of adults discussing them, often without including the children themselves.

Semple Begg used plants to paint a picture of what ‘elsewhere’ might look like, there was fun, fear and things that couldn’t quite be explained - like the dancing grasses. Their inspiration came from Alice in Wonderland, Willy Wonka and the land of Oz - tales that promise to transport children to another world. There was a sound installation, accessible through headphones at the front of the garden, rich and vibrant planting, water

features and the most beautiful anthropomorphic trees called Snorky and Grizzly - not their proper Latin names!

Just before we travelled to London, we heard that the Elsewhere Garden had won a gold medal! The chief executive of the Teapot Trust, writes: 'Winning a gold medal is a fantastic acknowledgment of the brilliance of Semple Begg's design in conveying the freedom gifted by art therapy. The most important point is that we've never lost sight of the reason we created the Elsewhere Garden - to reach more children so that lives can be transformed through the healing power of art therapy. For us, that's gold.'

We had an online training session with the Teapot Trust, the garden designers and the sound artist to prepare us, as volunteers, to deliver the message of the garden to the paying public. Nothing could have prepared us for arriving at Chelsea at 7am on Friday, not many people around at that time, but gardeners out watering and tidying, ready for another busy day towards the end of a busy week. When we arrived at the Elsewhere Garden we switched on the soundscape, donned out green aprons and began to engage with anyone who would listen about the garden and the charity.

We had been told during our training that the main focus of questions from the public would be the plants and, although we had done a lot of homework, the long Latin names simply did not trip off our tongues. Instead we told visitors about the work of the charity, told them about the Dolly Mixture stream, invited them to listen, though the headphones, encouraged them to speak into the watering can rose and make the grasses dance - how do they do that? - and pointed out our two dark and gnarled trees who supposedly came out at night to snuffle around the water, a den representing the darkness of children's fears.

We found that in telling about the transforming power of art therapy in children's lives, we heard stories in return. Parents and grandparents of children with chronic illness, and those with chronic illnesses themselves. We heard from gardeners about the healing power of plants, from health workers who work with those in need, from ministers, health workers and artists hoping to do similar work in hospitals close to them.

Project Giving Back is the vision of two private individuals who want to support a wide range of charitable causes whose work suffered during the global Covid-19 pandemic and continues to be affected by the economic downturn and cost-of-living crisis. The grant-making scheme gives UK-based charities and other charitable organisations the chance to apply for a fully-funded garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, subject to the usual RHS selection process. This is a unique opportunity for charities to raise awareness of and support for their work at the world's most famous horticultural event.

We are just back from London again, where we visited the London Garden Museum to see an exhibition of all the gardens given grants by Project Giving Back. This exposure means so much to small charities and allows them to continue and expand their work.



The Elsewhere Garden will have a permanent home at the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow, chosen because it serves areas of deprivation where painful long-term health conditions are more prevalent. The garden will be used as an area for outdoor art therapy combining the power of nature and art, as well as providing a space for young patients, their families and hospital staff to enjoy.

Eric and Sheena



Book group –

Our small regular band of readers met at 19.30 on Sunday 1st October to discuss 'A Tale Of Two Cities' by Charles Dickens.



Dickens's opening line, " It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness..." is perhaps one of the most famous and most quoted in the English language.

To those of us who had not been introduced to this novel before, we found the language difficult and cumbersome ("the worst of times") while to those who had read the novel before, "it was the best of times". The language is complex and difficult and Dickens, to many of us, used an excess of words to explain and describe the various scenes and happenings. Was this because the novel was written during the period of 'the enlightenment' when scientific discoveries, philosophy and language were expanding at an alarming rate? Parallels were drawn between the expansive writings of Dickens and those of Sir Walter Scott.

While the language was complex, his descriptions of the underclasses of both England and France were reckoned to be spot on and precise.

Because the book was written just 60 years after the end of the French Revolution, it is likely that Dickens would have had contact with people who had relatives that were alive during that period of history, much as our parents knew folks who lived through the First World War or the Boer War, (evidence from first hand sources).

Two of our group had read the book when they were younger and on this, their second reading, recalled how they were deeply moved by the journeys of the central characters. Now however in maturity they were less emotional.

Dickens used Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* as his main source of inspiration, and we wondered if this counted as plagiarism.

Written very soon after Dickens separated from his wife after twenty-two years of marriage and ten children, and at a time when he had just split from his regular publisher, the novel must have come at a low point in his life. This in part is reflected in his use of language and his vivid descriptions of hardship. Having parted company from his publisher, he undertook to self-publish. He produced his novel in magazine form, so there would be pressure on him to fill the column inches with words.

I only managed to read to page 81 but, having had the story line explained by those who had enjoyed the read, I am almost encouraged to continue through to the last page.

Our next meeting is scheduled for the end of November, when we will discuss *Death and the Penguin* by Andrey Kurkov. New members are welcome. We are also to read *Small Things like These* by Claire Keegan for January - both are fairly short.

Happy Reading. **George**

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



As I write this, the east wind is still trying its best to dislodge the leaves from the trees and the rain is falling. While we may not have been as badly affected as some folks farther north, Storm Babet has caused a halt in any gardening activities here in normally Sunny Joppa.

However, we, (Gill and I) have planted pansies and tulips in the recently refurbished raised beds on the west

side of the church. This is the season of bulb planting when we look forward, in faith and hope, to the turning of the seasons and next spring. Spring bulbs are on sale in many garden centres at the moment and can safely be planted right up until the end of November. I add some horticultural grit to the compost that I use for my pots of daffodils, Iris, tulips and hyacinths. Bulbs grow best in free draining soils and composts.



With the onset of late autumn and early winter, the diminishing day length and lower temperatures trigger an outburst of

exuberance in the foliage of many deciduous trees and shrubs. Autumn colour appears as if by magic almost overnight as the plants withdraw the green chlorophyll from their leaves and leave behind red, yellow and orange hues to delight our eyes. And then, the plants shed their leaves. However all is not lost: the nutrients extracted from the leaves as they changed colour are now stored in the plants stems and roots and will be reused next spring to fuel the new, fresh green foliage. The fallen leaves decay and return their nutrients to the soil - food for fungi, worms and other invertebrates. Nothing is wasted; nature is the original recycler.



The apples have all been picked from the allotment and stored in the garden shed and will be enjoyed over winter along with the crop of pumpkins and squashes we managed to produce. Some small pots of cress and mixed salad leaves have been sown in the cold glasshouse (you could do the same on your windowsill) and will supply the

kitchen staff with some fresh sandwich fillings.

The berries on the holly trees are starting to glow bright red now. Soon, when the blackbirds and thrushes arrive from Scandinavia the berries will form a welcome snack and food source. If you want to keep some fresh for Christmas, cut a few well berried shoots, put them in an airtight container and then in a cool dark place until the Advent season arrives.

With bulbs to plant, leaves to sweep and sweet peas and salad leaves to sow, there is lots to do in the garden.

Wherever you garden, enjoy your space. Happy Gardening.

George

Drama Group News

We are thrilled that several of our Church Drama Group will be appearing in OLIVER! At Portobello Town Hall on Wednesday 8th to Saturday 11th November including matinées on Friday and Saturday.

This production is a result of the creation of Stage Door Entertainment Ltd by Tommie and Aidan, two of our members.

As many of the cast and crew are Drama Group members and Portobello and Joppa locals, and many of the costumes are being supplied from our own wee Drama Group cupboard, we really feel a great affinity with this venture and wish it well.

Details and tickets can be obtained from <https://www.stagedoorentertainment.co.uk/oliver> or by phoning 0131 314 2841.



The Word for today

Accept... authority... humble yourselves... Give all your worries... to God (1 Peter 5, 5-7)

Someone once said, “The trouble with success is that the formula is the same as the one for a nervous breakdown.”

The Bible gives us the *real* formula for success: “accept the authority of the elders... humble yourselves under the mighty power of God... Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.”

So we should listen to the counsel of wise people and humble ourselves before God. We should accept His discipline and acknowledge His willingness to listen to our cry for help. This doesn't mean that there's no place for planning and hard work; it does mean that we do things according to His will.

© 2016: This devotional is produced by United Christian Broadcaster, free of charge through the generosity of our supporters. As a gift to the body of Christ, permission is given to Churches and Christian organisations to copy up to a maximum of 52 daily excerpts per year. Excerpts must acknowledge The Word for Today as the source, give the UCB address (see below) and inform that free issues of the daily devotional are available for the UK and Republic of Ireland – .Westport Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 4JF



Getting to know you – Susan.

She writes: *I lived in Australia until I was 16, then moved to South Africa,*

where I lived until early 2022. Stephen & I have been married for 40 years, and we have two daughters & two grandchildren. We have always attended Church, and I sang & played guitar for our Church Worship team for many years. We joined PJPC about a year ago when we moved to Musselburgh.



Q. What is a favourite piece of music, and why?

A. I love Handel's Messiah, because the music articulates the passages of scripture so brilliantly.

Q. What's your earliest memory?

A I remember a boy at my Nursery School having a bloody nose, and the teacher putting her car keys down the back of his shirt to try to stop it.

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

A. I currently work for Historic Environment Scotland as a Steward at Craigmillar Castle. I work with a great team of people and have exponentially improved my knowledge of Scottish history and specifically Mary Queen of Scots, since we have only lived in Scotland for about 18 months. Prior to moving to Scotland, I ran a Bed 'n Breakfast in Cape Town, and prior to that, I managed a Training Company in Johannesburg for about 25 years. I still regret that I did not train as an Occupational Therapist.

Q. What are you reading at the moment? Are you enjoying it?

A. *I have just finished Alexander McCall Smith's "The Enigma of Garlic". It is the second of his books that I have read recently (I read during my lunch break at work). I find him amusing, giving subtle insight into his various characters, but a bit lightweight. I have recently read "Courtiers" by Valentine Low, as I am fascinated by the British Royal Family.*

Q. What do you do to relax?

A. *I have always enjoyed singing in a choir. I sang in the Symphony Choir of Johannesburg and then the Philharmonia Choir of Cape Town. One of my singing friends pointed out that it was probably the only time during the week when we breathed properly! I love the music, the adrenalin of performances, the amazing experiences I have had and the friendships that I have made.*

Q. What is your most prized possession?

A. *Our younger daughter wrote a book for me in her final year of school entitled "Mommy Amazing".*

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

R. *When Nelson Mandela was released, marking the end of the Apartheid era in South Africa, the National Anthem changed from "Die Stem" to "Nkosi Sikelel' Afrika" (translates as God Bless Africa). In celebration of the change, a Park in Johannesburg was re-named after the composer of Nkosi Sikelel' Afrika, Enoch Sontonga. Our Choir was invited to sing all the renditions of Nkosi Sikelel' Afrika as it evolved from a Xhosa Hymn to National Anthem. Nelson Mandela attended the event and shook each of our hands at the conclusion of the concert.*

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

A. *Could a toothbrush be defined as a luxury? Otherwise, a mosquito net.*

Q. What single thing might improve your everyday life?

A. *With our recent move halfway across the world, I estimate we got rid of at least half our possessions. The thought of having to do that was hugely challenging, but, in retrospect, it was very cleansing. It felt really good to get rid of so much clutter. Therefore, I can honestly say, I am really contented with the reduced number of “things” we now have. Perhaps the only thing that would help improve everyday life would be written instructions on how the boiler and central heating system works in our home!*

R. What is a favourite quotation?

A. *Gary Player: “The more I practise, the luckier I get”.*

Q. What kind of music do you listen to?

A. *I enjoy most music, except hard rock. When I choose music to listen to at home, it would either be jazz or light classical.*

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

A. *I’m quite good at getting up in the morning and I like to know what is happening each day, although I do occasionally enjoy a day where I have nothing planned. I am notorious in my family for not being late ... I would rather be 3 hours early than 1 minute late – apparently this is a gene I have inherited from my Grandmother. Stephen has had to learn to cope with this challenge, especially when we are travelling. I often have lists on my phone of things that need to be done and enjoy seeing those items ticked off by the end of the day.*

Q. Where would you like to be right now?

A. *I am delighted to be in the UK – it was a big decision to pack up and leave South Africa, and we have been very blessed with how “things” have fallen into place.*

Brain-teaser



This month I've been thinking about Guy Fawkes. We enjoy celebrating Bonfire Night, but it's very strange that we're still thinking about this man – and in a jolly way! - more than 400 years after he was involved in a plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament and thus kill King James VI and I and the government. His motivation was religion – James was a Protestant and Fawkes was a Catholic. And in some parts of the world, as we all know only too well, people are still doing awful things in what they claim is the name of religion.

How many words can you make with the letters of BONFIRE NIGHT? I got 37.

How much do you know about Guy Fawkes? For example...

- 1) Where was he born?
- 2) What was the name of the leader of the plot?
- 3) What alias did he give to his captors?
- 4) How old was he when he was executed?
- 5) Why do we celebrate this as "Bonfire Night"?

Did you know... that the word "guy" that we use today is because of Guy Fawkes? It was first given to the effigy of him that was burnt on the bonfire; then became a word to mean an ill-dressed person; and now often means, well, just a person.

Did you also know... that a professor of history at the University of York, has suggested that (in some people's opinion) Guy Fawkes was "the last man to enter Parliament with honest intentions"?

Alison

*1-4 York, Robert Catesby, John Johnson, 35.
5 People were encouraged to light bonfires on each November 5 to celebrate the foiling of the plot. An Act of Parliament designated the day as "a joyful day of deliverance". This wasn't repealed till 1859.*

How (some) other people do it

We recently visited my brother and sister-in-law in Cambridge, where they moved last year from Surrey. Their previous, small, church congregation consisted mainly of older people and, though all were friendly and committed, the church didn't seem to be able to attract younger members.

We were interested to see my brother's Cambridge congregation, where we were very much among the minority in having white hair. Indeed, the young or youngish people who were attending the service treated my brother, his wife, my husband and me with kindly solicitousness, making us feel old in a way that we hadn't yet experienced in church! This was very sweet, if slightly depressing...

There was no reading out of prayers from a prayer book, as we've experienced in other C of E services, and the music was mainly modern, of the happy-clappy variety. The church was well-filled. I asked my brother for details about the services and he wrote:

"There are services every Sunday at 09:30, 11:15 and 17:00. The first two are identical (give or take the occasional baptism etc). Communion is observed once a month at each of these services.

There is also an occasional (once a month?) 15:00 'traditional' service, ie following the formal Church of England liturgy; I think that is required by the CofE. We've never been to it, but I believe there is a small but loyal congregation of mainly older folk.

A band plays for the morning and evening services, but from time to time the final hymn is a traditional one and is played on the organ, and the organ is often used for funerals, some weddings and the traditional carol service. I say 'a band' because there are maybe 25 players of various instruments (including Steffi [his wife] on the piano) of whom usually 5 play on a Sunday.

The church also supports a number of missionaries in the UK and abroad, and also a smaller church in Cambridge, though I don't know to what extent that is financial support.

The history of the church is rather complicated, but essentially it was down to a handful of members in the early 2000s, when 20 (?) families led by Steve Midgley moved in from a neighbouring church to revive it. The CofE doesn't have the concept of membership, but there are about 400 adults and 100 children who are regular attenders. There is quite a high turnover, because Cambridge is like that, having two large universities and numerous tech and biotech firms."

They have a vicar; a "senior associate minister"; a curate; a vicar emeritus; a ministerial trainee; a youth worker (secondary age); a children and families worker (pre-school and primary); someone who focuses on seniors (us!); and someone who focuses on outreach. Not to say an operations manager, an office manager and an office assistant. My brother, however, thinks that at least some of these positions are part-time, possibly very part-time.

We were at the first service. The music wasn't really to our taste, but the congregation seemed to join in enthusiastically. The children stayed for the first hymn and then went out to Sunday School (which wasn't called that, but I forget what its name was). Perhaps the major difference between what we do and what they did was that, when people first came in, they didn't immediately sit down but instead gathered at the back of the church (where there was quite a big space) to chat for ten minutes or so. We were instantly noticed as strangers, and several different people came to talk to us. This contributed to a very friendly and informal atmosphere and it did occur to us that we could probably create such a space at PJPC by removing some chairs from the back. Then we would also need to change our sitting-down habits, which might be more difficult.

Anyway – it was interesting to see what others do.

Pam

LIFE AND WORK November 2023



Remembrance ‘A privilege to follow God’s call’: an insight into the lives of chaplains to the armed forces

Remembrance prayer from the Moderator of the General Assembly

‘Guild Needs to Change’ A report from the Annual Gathering of the Church of Scotland Guild

New Minister for Sanctuary First A change of leadership at the Church’s online worshipping community

A Deeper Understanding An Episcopalian priest reflects on his experience working for the Church of Scotland in Fife

‘Life is Still Good’ The Very Rev Dr James Simpson reflects on the challenges of ageing.

Whispering and Proclaiming Ruth Harvey considers the messages of Matthew 10.

View from the Pulpit The Rev Scott Brown reflects on the value of rural ministry

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

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.

Remembering

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 14 August | Elizabeth Cassidy of Craigentiny |
| 15 September | Lily Dunn of Joppa |
| 17 September | Gordon Barnes of Haddington |
| 22 September | George Simpson of Portobello |
| 7 October | David Cunningham of Musselburgh |
| 11 October | John Lodge of Colinton |
| 16 October | Rachel Dick of Fife |



MAGAZINE/DIARY DEADLINES

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| December 2023/January 2024 | 19 th Sunday November 2023 |
| February 2024 | 21 st Sunday January 2024 |
| March 2024 | 18 th Sunday February 2024 |

Scottish Charity Number : SCO11728

www.portyjoppachurch.org

Photography by Kim Kjaerside