

# Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish  
Church Magazine  
March 2022



# *Portobello and Joppa Parish Church*

## ***From the editor***

In his letter to us, Lourens asks us to think about what we're prepared to leave behind so as to live with integrity. I've just left a daughter and little granddaughter behind in London, and it was hard.



Little granddaughter (4) made and decorated a card to send to her grandpa, who hadn't come with me. She dictated a message to go in the inside: "This, speaking, is Astrid and your dear old husband - Granny. We miss you very much. Can you visit us at our house very soon, as well as Granny? Please please please."

Things are definitely becoming more in-person at PJPC – more people are visiting God's house - with "rolling" church and also rolling coffee. Having said that, this is a rather sparse edition of "Soundings". Do feel free to send in some interesting material for next month!

There's important information from Stewart about developments underway in the church, involving – for us – links with Meadowbank and Willowbrae. You can read about legacies and other donations to PJPC. And there's news of both Junior Drama and the (senior) Drama Group. The latter are presenting *My Fair Lady* from 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April – dates for your diary.

Thanks as usual to the regular contributors.

**Pam**

## ***From the associate minister***

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

For the last number of weeks, we have been experimenting with Rolling Church. In many ways, it has been a fantastic and fresh re-entry into church life in our post lockdown world. Lots of people have commented to me on how wonderful it feels to be back in the building, especially being able to sit around a coffee table and reconnect with old friends. Something which we haven't been able to do for almost two years now.



During our planning for these Sundays, we decided that the services should all be tied together around a central theme and for the last number of weeks we have been focusing on the theme of “call”. We have been reflecting on God's call, not only for our lives as individuals, but for us as a congregation. And this last Sunday we heard the story of Jesus calling the first disciples by the Sea of Gennesaret following the miracle of the huge catch of fish.

Jesus said to them, “Follow me.”

I wonder what that looks like and means for your life today?

Simon and Andrew were casting a net into the sea when they heard those words, and they “left their nets and followed him”. James and John were in a boat with their father Zebedee mending the nets. They got out of the boat, “left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him”.

They left their nets, their boats, their father.

“Follow me,” isn’t only about going somewhere, it’s also about leaving behind. That’s the hard part for most of us. We’re rather good at accumulating and clinging but not so good at letting go. More often than not, however, growth involves some kind of letting go. We accept Jesus’ invitation to follow, not by packing up, but by letting go.

We can never get to a new place in life unless we are willing to leave where we are. We can never hold anything new or different unless we’re willing to drop what’s already in our hands. That means letting go of our nets, getting out of our boats, and walking away from old man Zebedee.

But let’s not literalize the nets, boats, or Zebedee. They are symbols and images descriptive of our lives and they hold a key to the “follow me” moments of our lives.

- What are the nets in your life? What things or relationships are trapping and entangling you today? What patterns, habits, or beliefs have snared and captured you? What nets do you need to leave behind today and what would that take?
- What are the little boats that contain your life and keep it small? Sometimes our boats can become illusions for control, security, or self-sufficiency. What fears keep you from getting out of the boat? In what ways do the routines, familiarity, and comfort of your little boat keep you sailing the same old waters of life? What would it take for you to get out of and walk away from that boat?
- Who is old man Zebedee in your life? In what ways are you waiting for or depending on Zebedee to give you an identity, value, and meaning for your life? From whom are you continually seeking approval? How are Zebedee’s

expectations of who you should be and what you should doing governing your life? And what would it be like to walk away from old Zebedee and reclaim yourself and your life?

Identify the nets, boats, and Zebedees in your life and you'll find a "follow me" moment.

"Follow me" is less about where we are going or what we have, and more about who we are becoming.

"Follow me" is Jesus' invitation to every one of us to step into the fullness of our life. It's a call to become fully alive. It's about becoming more authentically ourselves, living with integrity, and discovering our truest self. It asks us to engage the world and others with the heart of God.

So, in the weeks to come, with all that is on our horizon as a congregation, let's look at our lives as individuals, but also our life as a congregation – the nets, the boats, the Zebedees.

What is the "follow me" moment for you, right now, in the current circumstances of your life?

What do you need to leave behind?

**Lourens**

## ***Working together: Meadowbank and Willowbrae***



As mentioned in the last magazine, significant changes are underway in the Church of Scotland.

Because all that is happening is so important—‘historic’ is the word many are now using—a reminder of recent information that has been shared may be useful. And, a few extra bits of news.

There have been pressures on the number of ministers available to serve parishes and there have been financial pressures as well.

At the General Assembly it was agreed that each Presbytery would be allocated an agreed number of ministry posts. In the case of Edinburgh it is now 48.5 posts, a 40% reduction from the numbers in 2012.

A consultation document was released in December of 2021 with proposals for the manner in which different areas of Edinburgh could be configured. The challenge? How to serve the city and pursue mission in these new circumstances with fewer resources.

Prior to December of 2021, PJPC had been building up relationships with Bristo Memorial, Duddingston, Richmond Craigmillar and St. Martin’s. Due to the magnitude of the cuts, it has now been proposed that we begin to work more closely with Meadowbank and Willowbrae. The number 26 bus route, as it were.

This does not mean, however, that connections with the other churches will fray. Muddy Church with Duddingston will continue, informal contacts with St. Martin’s will continue and already there are conversations about a Christian Aid Pilgrimage that will include these churches as well as Richmond Craigmillar (Bristo has recently begun joining them for worship).

Initial conversations have already taken place with Meadowbank and Willowbrae. Meadowbank is currently vacant and the Transition Minister at Willowbrae retires on Easter of this year.

There are many possibilities for cooperation. Willowbrae have not required pulpit supply for years: when the Transition Minister has been away, members of the worship team who have participated in a worship course (run in part by Bill at St. Martin's), have led worship. Also, prior to the pandemic, Willowbrae had launched Messy Church, with encouraging response, and much enthusiasm from the congregation. Meadowbank have offered a more pioneering, fresh worship, which includes Dinner Church on Wednesday evenings. It too has a Cook Club that has drawn participants from the area. And their numbers have grown, including a younger age range.

PJPC's Session have discussed the possibilities of closer contact and will soon submit a considered response for Presbytery to consider. Discussions thus far have indicated an interest in pursuing closer relationships, noting some of the items mentioned above. Some concerns have been expressed about capacity and workload, the need for time to strengthen relationships and the distances. Both opportunity and challenge.

As these conversations with Meadowbank and Willowbrae continue, information will be provided. But please do not hesitate to contact Stewart or Michael Craig, the Session Clerk, if you have any thoughts or questions.

Many thanks,  
**Stewart**

# ***Worship***

<b>Sun. 6 March</b> (First Sun. of Lent)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 13 March</b> (2nd Sun. of Lent)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 13 March</b>	<b>7pm</b> Annual Stated Meeting (by Zoom)
<b>Sun. 20 March</b> (3rd Sun. of Lent)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 27 March</b> (4th Sun. of Lent)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 3 April</b> (5th Sun. of Lent)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 10 April</b> (Palm Sun.)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.)
<b>Sun. 17 April</b> (Easter)	<b>9.30</b> Quiet, reflective worship (30 mins.) <b>10.15</b> Informal, intergenerational worship (30 mins.) <b>11.00</b> Traditional worship (30-40mins.) <b>Other Easter worship to be confirmed</b>

## ***Legacies and other voluntary giving***

On behalf of the Finance team, I'd like to acknowledge with our gratitude the legacy gift from one of our former members, **Mrs Marion Thomson**. Legacy offerings such as this play an increasingly important role in enabling the Kingdom work here in Portobello and Joppa.\*

I'd also like to thank all the many groups who are part of the wider PJPC community and who made a financial contribution towards our upkeep over the past year. These include the following clubs and organisations: Probus Club; Rainbows, Brownies & Guides; Drama Group; Junior Drama Group; Parent & Toddler Group; Monday Coffee Club; Coffee Break; Messy / Muddy Church and the 25<sup>th</sup> Boys Brigade company. Not forgetting the ongoing support of The Guild!

**Adrian**

**Finance Convenor**

\* If you wish to find out more about how a legacy could help with the work of PJPC then please contact David (Honorary Treasurer) or myself.

*"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade." —Charles Dickens*

*"How terrible a time is the beginning of March. In a month there will be warmth and the sudden blossoming of orchards, but you wouldn't know it now. You have to take spring on blind faith."  
—Beatriz Williams*



## ***Junior Drama***

On February 10, we very much enjoyed Junior Drama's production of *Jack in the Beanstalk* – a Roald Dahl version. True to Dahl form, it was a slightly grisly - the giant ate Jack's nasty mother and grandma, and Jack stole the giant's gold while the big chap was sleeping off his meal of Jack's relatives. It was also funny!

The young cast was excellent, with Lois playing a spirited Jack, Sophia and Bridget giving us a suitably unpleasant mother and grandmother; and James playing an alarming giant. Rosa and Anna were the narrators, James (again) and Sam were the traders and there were splendid impersonations of various farmyard animals – including, of course, the cow – by Louisa, Emily S, Julianna, Emily L, Lucy and Ava. The singing – accompanied with her usual verve by musical director Fiona on piano - was splendid, and altogether it was a fun evening.

Many congratulations to Charlotte, who directed the show with Jamie. Thanks also to young helpers Leila, Chelsea, Hannah, Meghan and Emma (mainly young ex Junior Drama stars) and to choreographers Chelsea and Emma, costume providers Elaine and Maree, prop organisers Hannah and Meghan, and light and sound man Jamie M.



## WOULDN'T IT BE LOVERLY . . . . .

Yes, wouldn't it be lovely, to be sitting, relaxing, watching

'MY FAIR LADY' presented by the Drama Group!

We have been back rehearsing, and are having great fun re-creating this much loved musical! Wonderful songs, such as 'I'm Getting Married in the Morning,' 'the Ascot Gavotte' and 'I Could Have Danced All Night' are a joy to sing!

Following Church of Scotland guidelines, the Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Drama Group proudly presents Lerner and Loewe's 'MY FAIR LADY' from **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April to Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April (including a Saturday matinee).**

Tickets, priced £12 for adults and £6 for students and children will be available from mid March.

'What a smashing, positively dashing spectacle!'



While the current climate is seeing the availability of Disability Day Services decline, our Transitions service in Edinburgh opened in July 2019. Shaped around the Principles of the National Care Standards, Transitions is committed to keeping young people's individual wishes, aspirations and needs at its heart.

People are encouraged to be involved in the decision-making relating to every aspect of their lives, and the user-friendly approach uses pictorial, easy-to-read support plans. Customers choose when they want their service and, as far as possible, the workers who provide their regular support.

Following his recent visit to the service, Jim Wallace (Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Liberal Democrat peer in the House of Lords) commented: "One of the things that really struck me is just how the service being provided is focused on the particular needs of an individual. The service is tailored to the person's need."

For example, Dr John M says, "CrossReach is a charity organisation that has been of huge help to my special needs son, Alex. He is 20 years old and has learning difficulties and some autistic features. He was at a special school since age 5. CrossReach took Alex, after he left school at 18, for 6 hours a day, five days a week. He loves it there. From an uncertain start he has become very settled and fond of the staff and other service users. His social skills, stress levels and communication have all improved. He goes out into the community and experiences what it has to offer – such as the gym, pool, cinema etc.

"I'm exceedingly grateful to the local authority for funding Alex's placement and to the wonderful, committed CrossReach staff who work there. I would have been unable to continue working in the NHS if I had not had their support. It's an amazing place where the young folk are safe and kept busy, hopefully acquiring some useful life skills. It is a very worthy cause and deserves support for the brilliant and kind work they do. Thank you all."

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



As I write this, there is a red weather warning out for the southern half of England and a yellow warning for Southern Scotland. We have certainly had our fair share of strong winds and lashing rain - and even snow.



I have a small selection of camellias in the garden and one of the earliest to flower this year is *Camellia x Williamsii* 'Freedom Bell', a semi-double bright red flowered variety. It sits below a pear tree and offers safe refuge from sparrow hawks to the various garden birds that visit the feeders hanging there. One of the other camellias I have is also pink / red flowered and goes by the name of 'Anticipation'.

Always one to look forward to. Life is always full of anticipation. What is interesting this year is that they all look like flowering about two weeks earlier than normal. Not a surprise really, as we have had hardly any frost to speak about. The best garden camellias to grow are the 'Williamsii' hybrids, which are extremely hardy and reliable flowerers. Plant them in a position where they are sheltered from the cold east winds and early morning sun and they will do well.

Meanwhile there are signs of spring in lots of the neighbourhood gardens, with daffodils pushing their way up through the cold soil. There are even some early shoots showing through the gravel at the front door of the church: bulbs planted by the Brownies some years ago. There will even be some bulbs pushing through

in the raised beds on the west of the Church, and in the grass on the east side there are crocus, daffodils and some dog's tooth violets to look forward to. In the small beds either side of the gate to the main corridor, the miniature daffodil Tete a Tete will be a welcome sight to all our visitors.



I enjoy the surprises that come every spring. The hardships of winter are generally behind us, the glory of early spring is awaited and the promise of the sunshine of Easter anticipated.

Gardening holds much interest, promise, fulfilment, enjoyment and anticipation.

Happy Gardening

**George**

*Weather means more when you have a garden. There's nothing like listening to a shower and thinking how it's soaking in around your green beans.*



## ***A call to prayer***

**“Phebe... hath been a succourer of many” Romans, 16, 1-2**

A church needs members committed to supporting and encouraging one another – people like Phebe, whom Paul called “a succourer of many”. “Succour” comes from the Latin “succurrere”, meaning “to run to help”.

In our busy lives, it’s hard to find time to run to help. But the truth is that there’s no greater investment of our time. And when we invest in another person, we give *ourselves* a gift, because we can’t light *their* path without brightening our own. And it brings divine rewards: “Whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord.” (Ephesians 6,8.)

The chances are that someone played a pivotal part in our lives, in helping us to get where we are today: a parent, a teacher, someone who saw more in us than we saw in ourselves. Now – it’s our turn.

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## Brain-teaser



March 17 is St Patrick's Day. He may (or more likely may not) have looked like this – part of a stained-glass window representing him in the St Patrick Catholic Church, Junction City, Ohio.



How much do you know about him? Can you fill in the blanks below?

*He was born in the country which is now ....., probably in the ...th century, was captured by pirates at the age of 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave.*

*He later escaped and returned to his family, but after training as a cleric, he returned to Ireland. Early medieval tradition says that he was bishop of ..... and primate of Ireland. By the .....th century, he had come to be revered as its patron saint. (Answers below.)*

Can you solve the clues below? They spell out the word PATRICK.

- P - - - - - Hymns that are translations from the Bible, set to rhythm, for singing  
A - - - The fifth book of the New Testament  
T - - - - - Place of worship  
R - - - - Teacher  
I - - - - - Palestine  
C - - - Abel's brother  
K - - - - ...or, wise men

## Alison

### Answers

**Patrick's life:** Britain, fifth, Armagh, seventh. **Words:** psalms, Acts, temple, rabbi, Israel, Cain, Kings



## ***Getting to know you – Gillian –***

*I've been a member of the church family since primary school days along with brother Graham, dad Ian and late mum Lilian. I've served as a Sunday school teacher, President of the Young Women's Group and I currently sing in the church and Feast of Life choirs.*

### **Q. What is a favourite hymn, and why?**

A. Such a difficult choice to make, as I do love singing, as many will know, and I love singing hymns in church. If forced to choose, *Amazing Grace* with its message of forgiveness and redemption is high on my list.

### **Q. What is an early church memory?**

A. Sitting in St Philip's (as it was then) church hall, 1970s, at Sunday School led by Bob Aitken (fondly remembered) and with Mrs Gibson as my teacher. Many years later it was a delight to take my own two children Ellen and Peter to Sunday School and serve as a teacher myself.

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

A. I don't think I could have hoped for a better job and have been so fortunate with my career choice, working as a Speech and Language Therapist. Although there are frustrations in all jobs, I've had such satisfaction in helping others to develop, regain or maintain the ability to speak and communicate.

### **Q. Your fairy godmother has granted you one wish. What would it be?**

A. Peace on earth – allowing happiness and freedom to all people and nations.

**Q. What is your most prized possession?**

A. Perhaps not what you would class as a possession, but my voice and the ability to communicate with others through words (and song) is such a wonderful and unique human ability. Through my work, I'm acutely aware how important communication is for connecting with others in different communities and at all stages of life.

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

A. While training at Jordanhill College in Glasgow in the 1980s, I attended a local church - Knightswood Baptist Church - and choose to be baptised by immersion, as a commitment to God and public sign of my faith.

**Q. What do you do to relax?**

A. I'm not really one to spend time relaxing alone, unless with my dog 😊, but much prefer socialising with family and friends, having a meal together, going to a concert or theatre, perhaps.



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

A. Not really a quotation, but a lovely blessing (Irish) - *May the road rise with you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. May the rain fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you, in the hollow of his hand.*

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

A. I love classical music - instrumental, choral, opera and more, and of course any involving my children, recent graduates of music – Ellen in singing and Peter in French horn. I should also mention, also music involving my husband Douglas, who plays accordion and clarinet.

## ***LIFE AND WORK March 2022***

**Scotland's Year of Stories** 2022 has been designated the Year of Stories in Scotland. Jackie Macadam learns about the importance and power of storytelling in the Christian faith, and interviews storyteller and author Donald Smith.



### **The Five Marks of Mission: To Teach, Baptise and Nurture New Believers**

Continuing the series on the Marks of Mission, Thomas Baldwin speaks to ministers of two churches which have welcomed considerable numbers of new members in the past year.

**Faith in Action** Official monthly update from the Faith Action Programme.

**A Giant of Spiritual Life** The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers remembers Archbishop Desmond Tutu's speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

**Unity in Community** The Moderator reflects on the strength of working together.

**'Our Loving Father Will Always Listen'** In this month's youth column Orla Wheatley, 16, reflects on the key moments in her journey of faith.

**A Sense of Restlessness** Albert Bogle explains why restlessness can be a sign of preparing the way for the future.

**'One of the Prettiest Landscapes in Scotland'** John R Hume reflects on the parish church of Langholm.

**Daily Bread** David Searle continues his series on the Lord's Prayer.

**Plus** News, letters, readers' pictures, crosswords and registers

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## ***Remembering***

If you or another member of the congregation have a special birthday or anniversary coming up and would like to share news of this, or if you would like to share a tribute to a member who has died, please feel free to contact the editor with your contribution.



## ***Baptism***

**27 February**

Freya Enid, daughter of Stephen and Hannah of Newcraighall

## ***Wedding***

**19 February**

Christopher and Katharine of Sutton

## ***Magazine/Diary Deadlines***

April 2022

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022

May 2022

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2022

June/July/August 2022

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022

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Photography by Kim Kjaerside

