

Parish Press



South Holburn Church

Christmas 2022

From the Manse...

Welcome to the Christmas edition of Parish Press.

What is it that you look forward to most about Christmas? Is it family gathering together? Is it catching up with friends and loved ones, some in person and others by Christmas card? Is it the decorations, the lights and the tinsel? Is it giving and receiving gifts? Is it the Christmas specials on the TV? Is it Christmas treats and food? Is it the carols and the nativity? Is it the special feeling that the Christmas season seems to bring?

I suspect for most of us it is some combination of all of these things, with perhaps some of our memories of special Christmases past mixed in as well. Whatever it is that we look forward to at

Christmas time, there is no doubting that this is a unique and special time of year.

Even in these difficult times, as folk struggle with the cost-of-living crisis, with worries about heating their homes and having enough food to eat, Christmas still remains as a special time of the year.

And that is both the problem as well as the joy of Christmas. We all want Christmas to be special, we pull out all the stops, we go over the top. We stress about getting the right presents and worry about leaving someone off our Christmas card list. We sweat over the cooking to make sure that Christmas dinner is a meal never to be forgotten. We try so hard to make Christmas special. But is all that stress, all that effort, all that worry,

really what makes Christmas special?

I was recently visiting a friend who has a 3-year-old daughter. When it came time for her to go to bed, she came and hugged us all, and then asked her dad to come and read her a story. "Which story?" he asked her. "Silly daddy," she replied, "the one with the bear." It later emerged that 'the one with the bear' was the story that she had read to her every night when she went to bed. It was her favourite. She knew every word of by heart, but it didn't matter how many times she had heard it, she still wanted to hear the story again.

I was thinking about that. I am a bit older than her (by a good few years!) but I would have to say that I agree with her thinking. The stories that mean the most to me, the books that I enjoy most, even the films that are my favourites, are not ones that I have heard or read or seen only once. They are stories that I return to again and again. The Star Wars movies are my favourites, I have watched them so many times that I know all of the words -

yet I still love to watch them. The Lord of the Rings Trilogy of books are among my favourite novels, and I try to read them again every couple of years. It turns out that the stories that mean most to me are the ones that I have heard again and again and know so well - just like my friend's little daughter.

We all know the Christmas story so well, we know of the stable and the angels, the shepherds and the wise men. We are not going to learn any new parts of the story this year. There are no new characters to reveal, no plot twists you have not heard before. The story of Jesus' birth recounts the coming of God's son in our midst. It recalls the moment that history changed. It tells of the coming of one who would ultimately die in our place and take away our sin. It speaks of the wonders that happened at his birth and assures us that because this child has come '*a light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it*'. It reveals the love of God for each and every one of us, a love that goes to any lengths. Max Lucado, one of my favourite authors, has this

to say of Christmas:

"Can anything make me stop loving you?" asks God, 'Watch me speak your language, sleep on your earth, and feel your hurts. Behold the maker of sight and sound as he sneezes, coughs and blows his nose. You wonder if I understand how you feel? Look into the dancing eyes of the kid in Nazareth, that's God walking to school. Ponder the toddler at Mary's table, that's God spilling his milk. You wonder how long my love will last? Find your answer on a splintered cross, on a craggy hill. That's me you see up there, your maker, your God, nailstabbed and bleeding. Covered in spit and sin-soaked. That's your sin I'm feeling. That's your death I'm dying. That's your resurrection I'm living. That's how much I love you'"

from 'In the Grip of Grace'

This story of God's love, a love that pierces all our worries, hurt and despair with a shout so loud all the world can hear it – "You are loved, God Himself gives up heaven for a manger in a stable just so that He could share eternity with you", this story is truly what makes Christmas special.

So I hope you have a wonderful Christmas. I hope you get the presents you want, and that everyone loves the presents you give them. I hope that all the food is perfectly cooked, and that everyone has the best time. But, above all, I pray that you will know the one who truly makes Christmas special - the child in the manger, Jesus who is Immanuel, God with us.

I wish you a happy Christmas and all God's blessings for 2023.

Your friend and minister,

David Stewart

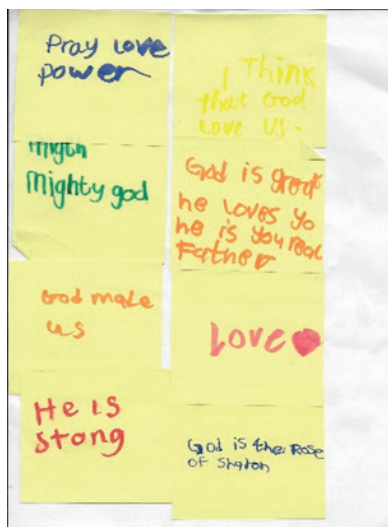


THE BIRTH OF
Christ

Work Updates from John Amalanand Parish Assistant

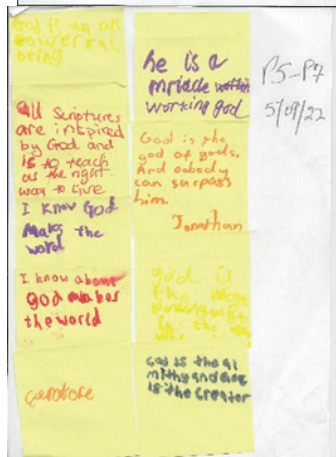
Student Welcome Meal

We had 10 Students who attended this in September. We had a few ice breaker games and lots of delicious food. I had awesome support from the volunteers which was very encouraging.



Scripture Union Lunch-Time Club at Kaimhill Primary School

By the grace of God, the club is running successfully with around 15 - 30 children attending it regularly. Our plan is to teach stories from Genesis to Revelation in 2 years. We are about to finish Genesis and hope to start Exodus in the new year. On the first day of the club, children were asked to write who God is to them and you can read some of their answers in the pictures.



The club is currently run by a total of 3 volunteers and we require 1 more volunteer. Please contact me at 07378777996 if you are able to help with this.

Sunday Club (3+ ages)

Since my last update in summer, God has blessed our Sunday club with 7 new children. 5 more children came for just 1 or 2 Sundays which is something to be thankful for too.

Students and Young Adults Service

We currently do not have any student attending this service at 9am which is for students only. We do have a few Students who are worshipping with us in the 10:30am service. I will be taking measures in the new year to grow this. We have seen a big growth in building relationships with RGU Staff and Accommodations. I can only praise God in faith now for all that He will do in the coming year.

Upcoming Events



Winter Holiday Club

4th, 5th, 6th January

10am – 12pm

for P1 – P7 Ages.

Christmas Meal

for Students who will miss being with family and friends during the festive season.

Thursday, 22 December
from 12 – 2pm.



Prayer Points

SU Club:

Pray for continued oneness and unity among the leaders.

Pray for children to attend the club regularly.

Pray for more wisdom for leaders to make the club livelier and more attractive to children.

Thank God for the favour in the eyes of the lovely school staff and the parents.

Pray for open doors to start a new SU club in Broomhill Primary.

Sunday Club:

Pray that God will fill the leaders with His Spirit of love and wisdom to lead the little ones closer to Him.

Thank God for the new pupils who are currently attending church. Ask God to help us discover outreach ideas. Pray for more children to come to Him.

Please pray for the children at our church, particularly for their boldness and courage to hold on to their faith in Jesus amidst the challenges both at school and society.

Students and Young Adults:

Pray for more Students' and Young Adults to join our church and for hearts to be receptive to the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray for the Lord's guidance in the new year to help us show fruits in this ministry.

Pray for a stronger witnessing of the Lord's love to this age group, both in deed and in word.

John Amalanand

Parish Grouping News

Members from the Churches in our parish grouping (*South Holburn, Ferryhill, St. Mark's, Holburn West, Queens Cross, Rubislaw and Midstocket Churches*) have been meeting together for a number of months, looking at ways that we can work alongside and support one another. Out of these meetings came the idea to host a Christmas meal in the city centre for folk who might not have anywhere else to go to find friendship and welcome.

On Thursday, 1st December, at St Mark's Church, a group of volunteers from all of the churches gathered and wrapped presents and prepared Christmas dinner. In the evening, dinner was served to a group of 30 folk.

The food was much enjoyed, there was lots of chatting and gifts were handed out by Santa. For many of those who attended, this may well be their only Christmas gift, so as you can imagine, the gifts were received with great gratitude. It is hoped that friendship begun at this gathering will continue and grow in the New Year.

A proposal will be taken to the next Parish Grouping meeting

about regularly hosting an evening meal for folk in the city centre who are isolated and alone.



Some of the gifts ready for handing out by Santa

Light in the Darkness

A short service for those remembering a lost loved one this Christmas

Wednesday, 14th December
7:30 p.m.
at South Holburn Church



Our service for those remembering a lost loved one at Christmas time returns this year. Christmas can be a time when we feel the absence of a loved one so intensely. But it can be difficult to express that sadness and the loss because we don't want to spoil the good fun that everyone is having.

Our Light in the Darkness service is a chance to come along, be honest about your feelings, and find comfort in memories.

We light candles, we share stories, we write down our loved ones name in the memory book. And somewhere along the way we find comfort in the story of Christmas, even in the midst of our sadness.

All are welcome along to the service, so please come and share this time. If you know of anyone who is remembering a loved one, invite them along, maybe even come with them.



Mince Pies and Carols

Saturday, 10th December, 6:30 p.m.
South Holburn Church Hall

Please join us at South Holburn Church hall for the return of our Carols and Mince Pies get together on Saturday, 10th December, at 6:30 p.m.

This is a fun time of chat and laughter, singing and tasty treats and a chance to enjoy the best of Christmastime together.

As well as singing our carols, there are always one or two surprises as well!

All are welcome, so please feel free to bring family and friends!



Christmas Greetings

Christmas Greetings and
best wishes for the year
ahead. To all at South
Holburn Church.

Anne Stott

Dorothy Fraser would like
to wish everyone a warm
and peaceful
Christmas and good
health and happiness in
2023.

Best wishes for Christmas
and the New Year to all at
South Holburn.
George McGillivray.

Peace and Joy to all
Gladys Yule

Wishing everyone at
South Holburn a happy,
healthy Christmas and
New Year
Pat Moir

Season's Greetings to all at
South Holburn Church,
from
Peter and Alison

Alastair and Myrtle
wish everyone at South
Holburn a peaceful and
happy Christmas and
every blessing in 2023

Ian Mann wishes
all at South Holburn
a Merry Christmas
and a peaceful New
year.





David and Alison Stewart
wish everyone a very happy
Christmas time and wonderful
New Year.
God Bless in 2023

A happy and peaceful Christ-
mas and New Year
from
the Johnstone family

Norma & Michael Forbes,
will not be sending Christmas Cards.
Wishing everyone at South Holburn
Church.
A peaceful Christmas and
Best Wishes for 2023.

Warmest wishes to all our members, visitors and
friends for Christmastime.
Wishing you all every blessing for the New Year
from
the Kirk Session of South Holburn Church



A New Presbytery and a New Beginning

On the 1st January 2023, the Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland will cease to be, and a new presbytery will come into being - the Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.

As part of the ongoing reform of the Church of Scotland, new larger Presbyteries are being formed across the country, reducing the number of Presbyteries from 44 to 12.

The new Presbytery of the North East and Northern Isles will incorporate the former Presbyteries of Kincardine and Deeside, Aberdeen and Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, most of Moray, and Orkney. An area stretching from Laurencekirk in the South to Keith in the North and Braemar in the

West, as well as including the Isles of Orkney and Shetland - a mixture of rural and urban, coastal and island.

The Rev. Elspeth McKay (*pictured*), a former probationer at South Holburn Church, will leave her current post



as minister of Paisley Abbey and become the new full time Presbytery Clerk based in a new presbytery office in Aberdeen.

Rev. McKay said, "I am very much looking

forward to returning to the North-East and to getting to know the Northern Isles a bit better. I'm also looking forward to meeting people as we forge the way ahead with the new Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles."

The new presbytery will be made up of all of the members of the current presbyteries and therefore will be much larger than many folk will be used to (350-400 members!). The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles will meet five times per year, with three of those meetings taking place online and the other two meetings following a hybrid format with members meeting in person as well as others joining online.

The work of the new presbytery will, in part, be carried out by committees formed from the membership of the presbytery. The standing committees of the new presbytery will be: Church, Society, International Committee; Congregational Support Committee; Presbytery Planning and Deployment Committee; Property and Finance Committee; Training and Development for Ministry and Mission Committee. The convenors of each committee, along with other officials of presbytery, shall also serve on the Business Committee overseeing the work of the

presbytery. All of these committees will meet online for most of their meetings.

The first meeting of the new Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles will take place on 10th January 2023 and one of the first tasks will be to appoint a new moderator of the presbytery who will serve for a term of 2 years.

The reform of Presbytery was agreed at the 2019 General Assembly, with the intention of creating a simpler structure to enable the Church's work in reaching out to communities across the nation in the 21st Century. Already a number of new presbyteries have been formed: the Presbytery of the South West (*the former Ardrossan, Irvine and Kilmarnock, Ayr, Wigtown and Stranraer, Annandale and Eskdale, and Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbyteries*); the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian; and the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydeside. Further new presbyteries will be formed in 2023, with the whole process of reform being completed by 2024.

CHRISTMAS POEMS



The Snowball

I made myself a snowball,
As perfect as could be,
I thought I'd keep it as a pet,
And let it sleep with me.
I made it some pajamas,
And a pillow for its head,
Then last night it ran away,
But first - it wet the bed!

Shel Silverstein



At Christmas, lights burn brighter,
and friendly hugs get even tighter.
The spirit of Christmas fills the air,
and people seem to really care.

Merry hearts are filled with cheer.
Families and friends all draw near.
The streets around are all filled
despite the cold winter chill.

Everywhere there's smiling faces,
giving and receiving warm embraces.
And for a time, sadness disappears.
Peace, joy and hope replaces fear.

All because God's love came down
and filled the earth all around.
So we celebrate at Christmas time
our Saviour and Lord, holy, divine!

We honour Jesus throughout the year
so the Christmas spirit will linger near.
For the story of His birth is ours to
tell -
that Jesus became our Emmanuel!

Lenora McWhorter



Oh fruitcake, oh fruitcake,
Why are you heavy like a rock?
Why do people keep sending you to
me?
I really wish they would stop.



Your texture is like rubber,
And your fruit is chewy like gum.
I think noone would give you as a gift,
If they'd ever eaten some.

I've tried re-gifting you,
But you just keep coming back.
If I have to look at you one more
time,
I think my mind will crack.

I really hate to be wasteful,
And I don't like to act rash,
But I can't take it anymore,
You're going into the trash!

Kelly Roper

Journeying to Bethlehem, a long and tiring trek
Every bed was full that night, no matter where they checked
Stable is empty, someone said, a place to lay your head
Until a baby was born in there, a manger for a bed
Someone special and holy, the angels all said

Christened Emmanuel, a name chosen by God
How noble for one born in a situation so odd
Remembered now in prayers and churches all around the world
Immortalized in stories and songs learned by every boy and girl
Sacrificed upon the cross to forgive us all our sins
The Son of God who was born for us, who died and was born again



Carols for Christian Aid

Unleash the power of song this Christmas with our special carol

'When out of poverty is born', the beautiful carol written by Kathy Galloway, challenges us to remember amidst our Christmas celebrations, our neighbours around the world facing poverty, injustice and climate crisis. The carol echoes the words of Isaiah, fulfilled through the actions of John the Baptist, to 'prepare the way', calling us to generosity in our Christmas giving and actions that reaches beyond our immediate family and friends. It ask us to use the joy and hope that Christmas brings to imagine a new world for all. By sharing 'When out of poverty is born' with your church and community through your Advent and Christmas worship, carol services, or carol singing, you can stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers facing poverty and injustice. Unleash the power of song this Christmas by raising your voices with carols for Christian Aid.

When out of poverty is born
a dream that will not die
a landless, weary folk find strength
to stand with heads held high,
it's then we learn from those who
wait
to greet the promised day:
'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart
Be blest: prepare the way!'

When people wander far from God,
forget to share their bread,
they find their wealth an empty
thing,
their spirits are not fed.
For only just and tender love
the hungry soul will stay.
And so God's prophets echo still:
'Be blest: prepare the way!'

When God took flesh and came to
earth,
the world turned upside down,
and in the strength of women's faith
the Word of Life was born.
She knew that God would raise the
low,
it pleased her to obey.
Rejoice with Mary in the call:
'Be blest: prepare the way!'

**Words: Kathy Galloway, provided with
permission**

Suggested tune: Kingsfold



A Christmas Recipe for Mulled Wine

Ingredients

- 1 large orange
- 3 lemons
- 12 cloves
- 2 satsumas or clementines
- 2 x 750ml bottles red wine
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 150g caster sugar (optional)

Method

1. Carefully peel the zest very thinly from the orange and lemons using a vegetable peeler. Squeeze out the juice and reserve.

2. Stick the cloves into the satsumas.

3. Pour the wine, 1.2 litres/2 pints of cold water, and the citrus peel and juices into a large, heavy-based saucepan. Add the clove-studded satsumas and cinnamon sticks. Bring the mixture just to the boil, then reduce the heat until the mixture is simmering, cover the pan with the lid, and continue to simmer for about 1 hour. Stir in the sugar gradually during cooking, until the mulled wine is sweetened to your liking (you may not need all of the sugar).

4. Strain the mulled wine and serve hot in cups. ENJOY!!!!



HOPE IS BORN

CELEBRATE THIS CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT SOUTH HOLBURN



cpo.org.uk cpo

ADVENT SERVICE

Sunday, 4th December, 10:30 a.m. South Holburn Church

CAROLS AND MINCE PIES

Saturday, 10th December, 6:30 p.m. South Holburn Church

ADVENT SERVICE

Sunday, 11th December, 10:30 a.m. South Holburn Church

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Wednesday, 14th December, 7:30 p.m. South Holburn Church

A time of reflection for those missing a lost loved one

ADVENT SERVICE - Sunday Club Nativity

Sunday, 18th December, 10:30 a.m. South Holburn Church

JOINT CHURCHES CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Christmas Eve, 24th December, 6:30 p.m. Ferryhill Church

WATCHNIGHT SERVICE

Christmas Eve, 24th December, 11:20 p.m. South Holburn Church

JOINT CHURCHES CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

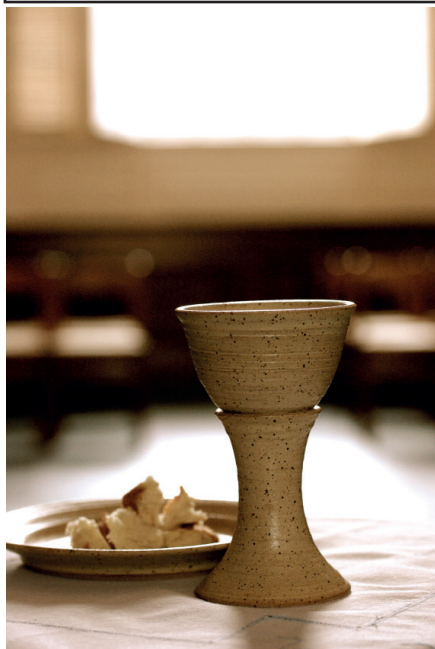
10:30 a.m. 25th December, St. Mark's Church

JOINT CHURCHES NEW YEAR SERVICE

10:30 a.m. Sunday, 1st January 2023, South Holburn Church

Communion Sunday

"Do this and remember me"



The
Sacrament of Communion
will be celebrated on

***Sunday,
29th January 2022
at our morning service
at 10:30 a.m.***

All our members are invited
to join us to share in the
bread and the wine.

Festive Retiring Offerings

This year the retiring offerings from our Christmas and New Year services are going
towards the work of

Instant Neighbour Trust

a local Aberdeen Charity supporting folk in poverty which South Holburn members
have supported through our Harvest Can Appeal and the Christmas Giving Tree
presents for young people.

South Church Office:
01224 961430 (answering machine)
secretary@southholburn.org

Website:
www.southholburn.org