

THE NEW WELLWYNDER

November/December 2020

Visit us at www.newwellwynd.org.uk

from the Manse -

Dear Friends,

It is certainly the strangest time that I have ever known. Even as I am preparing for Advent and Christmas I know that everything will be so different. Everything from the singing to the joining together at different services will be quite different in that we cannot sing when together and when we are together we are both limited in numbers and find ourselves distanced from each other. Imagine a Christmas without belting out Christmas Carols, hearing from the choir and watching our children and young people retell the story at the heart of this year rooted in the promises of God.

But, as Jason Leitch said on the BBC news, Christmas is not cancelled. We will just be doing it in quite a different way and in a way that reaches out to the congregation and beyond. In this magazine are details of in person and streamed services so, please take time to have a look at them.

In our journey through Advent into Christmas and beyond focuses on promises and promises fulfilled. These promises and the reality of what they mean for us and for the world are more important now than ever given the last number of months that we have had to endure.

A long time ago God looked down on the world he made and knew that he needed to break through the darkness and the hatred, the brokenness and the emptiness to bring light and love, healing and purpose. And today he doesn't look down anymore he looks around because the Advent of Christ meant that he, the very creator of all, made his dwelling place in our midst. He is not just above us and beyond us he is also with us in these dark and difficult times.

We lament because we cannot see the people we want to see. We find it hard because we have to distance ourselves to ensure the safety of all, both self and others. We understand it on one hand but find it oh so difficult on the other especially when everything is piling upon us at times.

Yet God is not distant in any of this and is not restricted in any way. Even with the restrictions we can be set free to find the

strength to cope and the will to endure. In all of this we are not alone because the companionship of God assures us of his presence and also brings us together a family of God albeit a virtual family these days brought together by the Spirit and bound together by love.

Come with me on a journey this Advent and let us draw closer to God and to each other.

*Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
Make us one in heart and mind, make us one in
love.*

*Humble, caring, selfless, sharing –
Spirit of the living God, move among us all.*

Love, thoughts and prayers
Your friend and minister.



CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Funerals : Margaret Frame;
Isabel McAlpine;
Joe Buchanan;
May Young.

Weddings :
Victoria Smith and Brad McCallum;
Kirstie Mauchline and Graeme Comrie;
Norah Buchanan and Mark Andrew

Change of Address / District :
Mrs. Janice Watt, from D.64 to D.52.

Future Sunday Services

Sunday, 29th November 11 a.m.	Advent 1
<i>Waiting in the dark</i> (in person and streamed)	
Sunday, 6th December 11 a.m.	Advent 2
<i>What happens in the wilderness</i> Holy Communion (in person and streamed)	
3 p.m.	Memorial Service (in person and streamed)
Sunday, 13th December 11 a.m.	Advent 3
<i>Mystery of the Messiah</i> (in person and streamed)	
Sunday, 20th December 11 a.m.	Advent 4
<i>Nativity Sunday</i> (in person and streamed)	
Sunday, 27th December 11 a.m.	
Sunday after Christmas <i>Family of Faith</i>	

Christmas Eve

Given the different circumstances we find ourselves in our Christmas Eve is going to look quite different but we still want to open our doors to as many of you as we possibly can. From 12 noon until 4 p.m. you and your families will be free to visit the church and see displays relating to the Christmas story. There will be something for you to read, to think about and to take away with you which you will be invited to use as part of the streamed 6.30 p.m. service on 24th December. Wondering what it is? Well, you need to come along sometime in the afternoon and see what we have in store for you. It is different but we want to make it as special and memorable as possible.

There will be two streamed services on Christmas Eve -

6.30 p.m. Christmas Eve All Age Service
Search for a Star

11.30 p.m. Christmas Eve Watchnight Service
Key Workers, Key Players

Christmas Day Service

As of yet, we don't know what Christmas will be like in relation to who can gather with whom and where and so we are offering a Christmas Day Service at 11 a.m.. If you will be on your own this Christmas we would like you to especially think of joining us to at least enjoy the company of others albeit safely distanced. The service is at 11 a.m..

BIBLE READINGS

October

- 11 Philippians 4 : 1 - 9.
18 1 Thessalonians 1 : 1 - 10.
25 1 Thessalonians 2 : 1 - 8.

Booking System

If you are interested in attending any of the in person services on a Sunday or the Christmas Day one please contact the team via the designated phone line.

To book a place at one of our in person services, please use the telephone number 07596482556 and you can either phone (and leave a message) or text, but text would be preferable. Please give your name, telephone number and how many seats you/your family/your bubble would like. The closing of the booking for the following Sunday will be 5 p.m. on the Wednesday. (e.g. please be in touch by 5pm on 25th November to ask for a seat on Sunday 29th November. You will receive a reply to the phone number you have given by 5p.m. on the Friday.

Letters have gone out to bereaved families for the Memorial Service.

For Christmas Day phone any Monday to Wednesday throughout December to secure a place.

Telephone Line

Don't forget that if you have no access to the internet you can access the Sunday morning service via telephone. An audio recording of the service is available by calling the following number - 01236-809268. It is a local number charging local rates.

Thank You

Many recipients of the Harvest Gifts have sent a text or left a message to say thanks for the gift and for being remembered. The plants were very much appreciated.

Unlocking Christmas - An A to Z Guide

This collection of daily thoughts and prayers written by the minister is now available for purchase at the cost of £5. There is a reading and a thought for each day in Advent to help in your preparation for Christmas. We make preparations in different ways so why not make this as part of your getting ready for the great feast of the Nativity.

Please get in touch with Robbie to place your order by phone (763022) or email (rhamilton@churchofscotland.org.uk).

All proceeds are going to Mavisbank School who are looking to buy an Ohm Projector to help with their work with the children. There will also be a just giving page set up in lieu of the retiring collection on Christmas Eve.

Basics Food Bank

The congregation gave generously to Basics Foodbank at the height of the pandemic. They are running low on stock again and are looking for our help and support as we approach December and Christmas. There will be a box outside the Manse (72 Inverloch Road) and at the entrance to the church each week. Donations of the following will be well received -

- 22 November Beans or tinned fruit
29 November Tins of meat or fish
6 December Custard
13 December Pasta Sauces
20 December Tin/Cup a Soup

In December, since it's Christmas if you'd like to donate a festive food item that would be wonderful as well - biscuits, shortbread, cakes, pudding, chocolates, crisps and snacks.

Offerings

Offerings by members are and remain vital to support the work and mission of the Church, both here in Airdrie and beyond. In these times of uncertainty and social distancing, continuation of offerings when we are less able to be present at worship has become even more important as much of that witness remains ongoing. So, it is important to start this note with grateful thanks to all those members who responded so well to the encouragement to take out standing orders as a substitute for using offering envelopes. To date, 53 new standing orders have been put in place, building on the numbers who gave by this means previously. This new and recurring income source – which has represented around 85% of all our offerings this year – has allowed us to continue to meet our various commitments, not least our ministries and mission contributions. Those contributions enable the worship and ministry at New Wellwynd and beyond. Not everyone was able to respond in this way, so appreciation is also expressed to those members who have filled their envelopes each week and found a way of getting these returned once the buildings partially re-opened a few weeks ago.

Offering envelopes for 2021 will be ready for distribution by Elders in early December. Elders will be advised when these can be picked up.

If you have taken out a standing order, it has been assumed that you are happy to continue support by this means and no envelopes have been issued. We are, however, also enclosing fresh standing order forms and if you are able to complete the form and get it to your bank, then you are encouraged to do so and give by that means rather than using envelopes. Gift Aid donation declarations are also enclosed – if you are a taxpayer and have not already completed a declaration, then this is a straightforward means that allows us to benefit from a tax recovery. This form should be returned to the church and, if your circumstances change, the declaration can be cancelled.

While uncertainties continue around, the certainty of the Gospel message of hope continues to be expressed in the faithful support of the many members of New Wellwynd.

David Watt

Christian Aid at Christmas

The financial impact of coronavirus is still hitting hard – with the world's most vulnerable communities feeling the devastating effects, which is why I am asking for your urgent support this Christmas. Families building businesses to work their way out of poverty have been knocked back again. Jobs in impoverished communities have disappeared. But even in despair, love can find a way. By making a special gift this Christmas, you can help give people the vital funds they need to find a way forward. To give you an idea of the amazing difference you can make, let me tell you about a remarkable young man from Nigeria. 21-year-old Imote lost his parents a few years ago and has to bring up his 9 siblings all on his own. But he was determined to find a way forward. Working day and night on their small farm, he earned enough money to buy daily essentials and pay the fees needed to send his brothers and sisters to school. Then coronavirus hit. This was devastating for the whole family. Imote told us, 'coronavirus affected us in many ways. The lockdown meant I could no longer sell produce from our farm and I was unable to buy food or household supplies. And with no money to pay the school fees, we could no longer attend.' But just when the future couldn't have looked bleaker, they received a lifeline. We identified the family as urgently needing support and Imote qualified for a cash payment. He was overwhelmed with joy! Projects like this show there can be a way – even when there doesn't appear to be one. You can change people's lives, even in the midst of devastation. So please, will you give this Christmas? Donations can be made online at www.christianaid.org.uk Thank you.

Sian Robertson (Christian Aid)

Christmas ANAGRAMS!

Can you identify these well known Christmas Carols and songs from the following anagrams?

1. **Dorthy jet wool**
2. **maana wearying**
3. **Annette birdlike whim**
4. **teflon whistler**
5. **heckled laths**
6. **hydro inholding merging**
7. **healthy hid novelty**
8. **amens fonts worthy**
9. **accountants looming waists**
10. **cruise shimmering throwaway**

The Four Stages of Life

You believe in Santa Claus.

You don't believe in Santa Claus.

You are Santa Claus.

You look like Santa Claus! *IM Jolly*

Used Postage Stamps

A wee reminder with Christmas fast approaching, please keep saving your stamps for our Church's World Mission. You can pass them to Jennifer Milne or leave at the Church entrance any Sunday with the Welcome Team. If because of these strange times you are not at Church please hold onto them and we can get them when things get back to normal!

Jennifer Milne

Solution to Anagrams:

1. Joy to the World
2. Away in a Manger
3. In the Bleak Midwinter
4. The First Nowell
5. Deck the Halls
6. Ding Dong Merrily on High
7. The Holly and the Ivy
8. Frosty the Snowman
9. Santa Claus is Coming to Town
10. We Wish You a Merry Christmas

What a year this has been!

There is little doubt in my mind that the vast majority of us will be glad to see the back of 2020! For many there has been frustration, loneliness, sadness, sorrow and even anger. Dare I say it has been unprecedented! The Coronavirus pandemic has affected all of our lives in one way or another. As we move towards a New Year let us look forward with hope. This year has shown that it is possible to imagine a time when life can get no worse. But take comfort, as it is impossible to imagine a time when life cannot get better. This means there is always something positive to look forward to. So let us all look forward to 2021 and whatever it brings – a new vaccine for the virus, peace in troubled lands and an end to poverty wherever it exists! Wishing everyone a very peaceful Christmas and happy healthy New Year when it comes!

The Editor

Christmas Crackers

Mirror Image - On Christmas Eve, Tom thought it would be nice to buy his wife a little gift for the next day. Always short of money, he thought long and hard about what that present might be! Unable to decide, Tom entered Debenhams and in the cosmetics section he asked the girl, 'How about some perfume?' She showed him a bottle costing £50. 'Too expensive,' muttered Tom. The young lady returned with a smaller bottle for £20. 'Oh dear,' Tom groused, 'still far too much.' Growing rather annoyed at Tom's meanness, the sales girl brought out a tiny £5 bottle and offered it to him. Tom became really agitated, 'What I mean', he whined, 'is I'd like to see something really cheap.' So the sales girl handed him a mirror!

Whinha' Christmas Poem

Wance apoon a time
Ower twa thousan' year ago
Began the story o' a wee wean
That maist o' you will know!

His faither's name wis Joseph
An Mary wis his mum
This wean wis very special
He wis God's only son!

It wis the bleak mid-winter
An frosty winds wir blowin
When Mary gave birth tae her son
In a shed wae cattle lowin!

Some angels appeared fae heaven
An a song they did sing
Tae shepherds in the fields below
Glad tidings did they bring!

A bright star lit up the night sky
Tae show three Kings their way
Tae the wee wean in the manger
Who wis born oan Christmas day!

An aw who gaithered roon him
Rejoiced an praised his birth
For this wee wean they ca'd Jesus
Is our Savior here on earth!

Whinha' Bard

A Real Christmas

CHRISTMAS! Huh,
it isn't like it used to be at all!
It's not a bit like Christmases of old
that I recall.
Oh, we knew how to celebrate
the season then, alright,
Although It was hard work for Mother,
and the money tight.
Why, I remember how we stirred
the Christmas puddings, and
Made wishes as we mixed them
wooden spoon in hand!
The aroma of them cooking was simply divine,
Made us feel that it would
soon be Christmas time!
We liked to peep and see them
on the shelf under the stairs
The cloths tied in a double knot
and neatly stacked in pairs
But just a little "taster-pud"
we'd try before the day
To make sure they were good enough
to please our Auntie May
For Mum said "Ev'rything she makes
turns out to be just fine
And I don't want her puddings
turning out better than mine!"

A Real Christmas (cont'd.)

But now they're bought from Supermarkets
in a plastic basin
and cost too much to buy if you are on
an old age pension -
Oh! Christmas isn't like it was at all!
I'd eat a plateful of mince pies
when I was just a kid
hoping that I would find a
"silver sixpence" 'neath the lid!
Today they're sold in boxes
and packed in cellophane -
Just one bite of the pastry
gives me indigestion pain.
You won't find any silver pieces
in amongst the filling -
You'll have a job to even find the mincemeat,
never mind a shilling!
The Christmas cakes are square now -
they can cut a smaller slice -
The little bit I got last year
would hardly feed the mice!
But anyway, the thin and tasteless
marzipan beneath
an icing hard as concrete -
well, it nearly broke my teeth!
We used to wash the fruit ourselves
and lay it out on trays
which rested on the fireplace fender
by the fire's blaze.
And when, the mixing over,
it was turned into the tin
we'd lick the spoon and scrape the bowl
as clean as a new pin!
The smell of that cake cooking
is a memory I treasure
it's simple things like that, that made
my childhood such a pleasure -
Oh, Christmas isn't like it was at all!
The Christmas tree was magical
and filled us with delight
It had real candles on it,
casting their mysterious light
Today, it wouldn't be allowed -
t'would be a fire-risk, so
They have those gaudy fairy-lights
instead of candle glow!
We hung our sugar mice and
candy shapes, just two a penny
upon a real fir tree -
nowadays you don't see many!
A lovely angel topped our tree,
we thought she was divine
Now Santa in a plastic space-craft
costs five ninety-nine!
Our trimmings were of paper chains
we children had hand-made -
Although we got more paste
upon ourselves, I am afraid!
Today they spend a fortune
just to decorate, you know
and you can get an aerosol of 'artificial snow.!'!

I still enjoy receiving cards
and letters in the post
But while a few have Christmas scenes,
or Santa, or mice,
Or funny red-nosed reindeer,
or skaters on the ice....
Oh, Christmas isn't like it was at all.
You never saw a Christmas feast like we had,
I'll be bound!
For all the Aunts and Uncles and our cousins
would come around.
There were jellies and blancmanges -
some in a rabbit shape
and we pulled the Christmas crackers
and wore hats made of crepe.
We played Charades and Blind Man's Buff
when we had finished tea -
But now, they "Shush" me if I speak,
their eyes glued to T.V.!!
It wouldn't be so bad if they spoke up
so I could hear
and now my sight is failing
so I really have to peer!
They sit me in a corner,
and they say to me "All right?"
And I mutter, "I suppose so" -though
I wish there was more light!
They say that I'm asleep when my eyes close,
they never know
I'm thinking of someone who kissed me
'neath the mistletoe
He was a handsome soldier-boy,
and I was just sixteen
And what a lot has happened
in the seventy years between!
There's not a day goes by but what I miss
my husband, Fred,
Although it's over twenty years now
that he has been dead...
Oh, Christmas isn't like it was at all!
Then I remember carol-singers
knocking on our door
they sounded just like angels,
and we always asked for more
"Once in royal David's city",
or my favourite, "Silent night."
Their rosy faces seemed to glow
with an unearthly light!
But now, they clap and holler
and strum on their guitars
and sing strange tunes, and shake their tins -
then dash off in their cars!
I often used to wonder
as I sang the carols, why
they told that the Lord Jesus
came down on earth to die.
But what a comfort later
when at last I understood -
"He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good!"
Forgive me for complaining,
I shouldn't really moan

It must be my arthritis,
and the hours I spend alone
I need to "get things off my chest",
but I can thank the Lord
He always listens to me - He has time -
He won't get bored!
He knows the pain and weariness of life,
He felt it too
So, I will count my blessings,
and just say this to you -

A REAL CHRISTMAS

hasn't changed at all!

Dorothy Bull

**The Coronavirus Diaries –
A Landscape of Broken dreams**

Continuing the series of updates in the Life and Work magazine from Church of Scotland partners around the world, the Rev John McCulloch, minister of St Andrew's Jerusalem & Tiberias, reports on the challenges facing Palestinian communities across the West Bank.

It was the French author Jean-Paul Sartre who once said that 'life begins on the other side of despair'.

The challenge for many of our Palestinian friends trapped in the occupied Palestinian Territories, is that Covid has turned an already desperate situation into an impossible struggle. There is real despair amongst the Palestinians, as everything seems to be stacked against them. With a collapsed economy, no government furlough scheme to help those who are out of work, a fragile health system, and surrounded by walls and checkpoints; it is little wonder that many are losing hope. On a geopolitical level, the normalising relations between Israel and other Arab nations is serving to entrench the injustices of Occupation, and the Palestinians feel abandoned and trapped. With fewer internationals here because of travel restrictions, settler violence and house demolitions have been on the increase.

A few weeks ago, after a month of lockdown in Israel, I was able to travel from Jerusalem to Area C of the West Bank to visit and accompany some of the Church of Scotland's partners there. On three consecutive days, I visited communities which are struggling under the double blow of occupation and pandemic. On one of the days I travelled with Rabbis for Human Rights, a long-standing partner of the Church of Scotland. It is a group of Rabbis who are advocating for an end to the Occupation. They rebuild Palestinian homes that have been destroyed, offer protective presence from settler attacks, and fight for their human rights. We drove through the scarred landscape of checkpoints, walls, and barbed wire, to an olive grove which is situated between two illegal settler outposts. During

this year's olive harvest, this Palestinian farming community have been attacked by armed settlers. Some of their trees have been burnt and destroyed. We spent the day listening to their stories and picking olives with them, as the army and settlers looked on from a distance. We then sat under the silvery green shade of an olive tree, and joined in an act of worship. A Jewish Rabbi sang a song, a fellow Christian minister said a prayer, a Muslim leader shared some thoughts. The following day I was with a Palestinian UN worker, visiting a family just outside Bethlehem whose home had been bulldozed. All their belongings were lying outside. As we sat on plastic chairs with the family, drinking Arabic coffee amidst the rubble of their home; on the hill opposite, Israeli settlers were watching us. We listened to the story of the family, who not only have lost their home, but now have no work, no income, no help from the local authorities. The father told us how his leg had needed to be amputated, and with no money for a prosthetic replacement, it now made it impossible for him to work. Not that there is work in any case. The third day that week, I visited the [Tent of Nations](#), in the hills to the west of Bethlehem, to help them with their olive harvest. Surrounded by settlements on all sides, we harvested the olives with a group of young Jewish volunteers. In the afternoon we shared communion at the Olive Grove Chapel, amidst the threatened olive trees. As part of our communion liturgy, I included these words:

'And on the night before your crucifixion, you sweated drops of blood amidst the olive trees.

You chose to drink the cup of suffering for our sake, and when the soldiers came and arrested you, you refused to meet violence with violence, to teach us a better way, and to establish a new kingdom here on earth. A kingdom where love conquers all! A kingdom where all dividing walls are brought down! A kingdom where love extends, even to our enemies!'

These three days in the West Bank took me to a landscape of broken dreams. If there is any small sign of hope, it is to be found by those who are willing to reach out beyond the dividing walls and embrace the other, and in remembering that we worship a God who is not distant from human suffering.

Rev John McCulloch

Useful Contacts

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