

# KINGSWELLS PARISH CHURCH



## Season of Hope and Expectation ADVENT NEWSLETTER 2019

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MEMBER/S.....

VISITOR.....Tel .....

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**FRIDAY 29 NOVEMBER**

**'Around Scotland with the Saints' Concert, 7.30pm in the church**

**WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER**

**Nosh and Natter, 12.30pm**

**FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER**

**Community Carol Service, 7.15pm at the Community Centre**

**SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER**

**Seniors Carol Service in the Halls, 3pm**

**SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER**

**Nativity Service, 11.00am**

**TUESDAY 24 DECEMBER**

**Christingle Family Service, 6.00pm**

**Watchnight Service, 11.15pm Pre-Service Music, 11.30pm Service**

**WEDNESDAY 25 DECEMBER**

**Christmas Day Worship 10.30am**

**SUNDAY 29 DECEMBER**

**Service of Lessons and Carols, 11.00am**

**SUNDAY 5 JANUARY 2020**

**Communion Service 11am**

**WEDNESDAY 8 JANUARY**

**Nosh and Natter, 12.30pm**

**FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY**

**Laurene's Birthday Ceilidh**

## FROM THE MANSE

In this season of uncertainty in the world, as we prepare to once again celebrate the Incarnation, the moment when God broke into human life in a human body, showing us just how close God is and how loved we are, I want to share with you this poem I read recently. It's by Lindy Thompson, and her other work can be found at [lindythompson.net](http://lindythompson.net).

I kept God small.  
I didn't do it on purpose.  
I didn't even know I was doing it.  
But I kept God small,  
portable, in my pocket.

I loved God.  
I loved my small God,  
and occasionally I pulled God out of my pocket,  
secured God to the dashboard,  
and said, "You drive."  
But later, when the road had cleared,  
and the fear had died down,  
I thanked God  
and put God back in my pocket.  
I had no need of God anymore.

Sometimes, I left God behind.  
I thanked God, always,  
because I loved God,  
but I would set God down carefully on my dresser  
amidst jewellery and photographs  
and leave, forging my own way,  
making my own decisions,  
hoping the blessing of having picked God up briefly  
and held God against my cheek  
would last throughout the day.

At night I would thank God again,  
because I loved God,  
and I would bring God to bed with me  
and mumble to God as I fell asleep,  
always dropping off in mid-sentence.  
At some point in the night my restless tossing  
would knock God to the floor,  
where God would lie  
until I stumbled out of bed to tend to the loudest child,

stopping a moment to pick God up  
and put God back on my dresser,  
or not.

Years, decades went by,  
and God and I continued along  
in our established,  
comfortable routine.

Then, as happens to us all,  
an unexpected season of my life arrived.  
The earth on which I stood tilted, cracked, gave way  
under the sudden weight of profound loss,  
overwhelming sadness,  
and deep, deep grief . . .and I fell.

Hands splayed,  
eyes wide with fear,  
heart racing,  
I fell.

*Words fail me here,  
for how to explain an explosive movement of God  
in a life where God had always been present  
but had been kept marginal,  
circumscribed, and safe?*

The best I can do is to say that  
my loyal pocket talisman e x p a n d e d

and became all there was —  
the space above me, below me, within me,  
the air rushing in and out of my lungs,  
my own pounding heart —  
all emptied of me,  
all filled with God.

I landed right in the middle of God,  
and sat up, stunned . . .  
caught, held, cherished,  
utterly astonished at the power and magnitude  
and infinitely tender love  
of the God I had kept so small.

Now my vision, my awareness, has been permanently  
changed.

I move in the world with an underlying reverence —  
received, not acquired —  
hands and pockets empty,  
eyes wide in amazement,  
turning about in surprise to catch the glimpses of God that  
are everywhere, **everywhere**.

The air is grace,  
the earth is love,  
my breath is prayer,  
and my heart,  
in the midst of my no-longer-small God,  
gives thanks.

*(c) Lindy Thompson, 2019*

Peace,  
Laurene

## **PASTORAL CARE**

Harvest Thanksgiving was held on Sunday, 29 September 2019 and the donations of tinned and dried goods from members of the congregation of was overwhelming. When I delivered the goods to The Cyrenians and Instant Neighbour the boot and back seat of my 4x4 were full on each occasion which gives you some idea of the size of the contribution. Both charities were very grateful for the donations.



On Sunday, 17 December 2019 a service of dedication for the work of our visitors was held in the church. I was delighted to see so many people in attendance, including 24 of our 27 visitors. In addition to delivering the quarterly newsletter many of the visitors undertake additional visits to their respective members and I know this is very much appreciated. Contact between the visitors and members of the congregation is important in the life of our church. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to our team of visitors for their strong commitment to the role. I am sure that you, as members, also appreciate the sterling work they do.

In the last newsletter I advised you that we would be holding a monthly service at Kingswells Care Home and I am delighted to report that the two services to date have been very much appreciated by residents and staff. **Our next service is on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December, at 2.30pm when we will be singing carols, hopefully you can come along and lend your support.**

May I remind you that we provide transport to and from the weekly church service for members who may not have transport or unable to walk to church. If you would like to make use of this service, please speak to your visitor or give me a call.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

***Ian Gordon, Pastoral Care Team Leader, Telephone 01224 743397***

A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. <sup>5</sup>That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another.

<sup>6</sup>God has also given each of us different gifts to use. If we can prophesy, we should do it according to the amount of faith we have. <sup>7</sup>If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. <sup>8</sup>If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully. **Romans 12: 4-8**

## THE PRESBYTERY PLAN

### KINGSWELLS CHURCH IS NOT CLOSING.

**First, it is important to stress that the Presbytery Plan is a proposed Plan, a Plan that through consultation and debate will be subject to change before it is presented to Presbytery for its final agreement or further amendment next year (2020).**

**Second, the Presbytery Plan has had to take account of three important issues facing the Church of Scotland nationally:**

- The need to re-imagine what it means to be ‘church’ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – to focus on our mission - to worship, to serve our communities and to make followers in the steps of Jesus. To recreate a church that is relevant to society; a church that promotes love for all humankind, compassion and justice; a church that is inclusive and provides a moral compass for us all.
- A severe shortage of ministers of ‘word and sacrament’ to the extent that in future not all churches will be in a position to have a full-time minister allocated to them;
- Church buildings that are either deemed to be surplus to requirements, not fit for purpose, or not in the right place: some require to be vacated and sold or replaced by more modern cost-effective resourced buildings in the right place.

**Third, it is envisaged the plan will be developed, implemented and completed over a period of **ten years**.**

To take account of the shortage of ministers it is proposed that Kingswells Church will become part of a larger parish that will include the parishes of Peterculter, Cults, Craigiebuckler, and Mannofield that together become the West Aberdeen Parish served by a team of three ministers and a parish worker.

To take account of the buildings issue it is proposed that the new parish will centre its activities on the *‘current Church and Kirk Centre at Cults, Mannofield Church and Halls, Peterculter Church and Centre and a potential newly built facility in Countesswells to serve the Craigiebuckler, Countesswells, and Kingswells areas’* with an expectation that *‘community worship would continue in Kingswells in a ‘community building’ in the new centre of the village with a*

*ministry team member settled there*'. **It is clear that developing this proposal into the future includes a 'church' and the presence of a minister in Kingswells.**

The Kirk Session has debated these proposals on two occasions and also met with its partner churches to discuss with them the future development of the new enlarged parish and how in particular we together extend our mission into the new housing development in Countesswells. Such discussions will continue, and the Kirk Session has set aside a specific meeting in early January to address the issues that arise from the plan for our parish.

We will specifically wish to develop our thinking as to how we can best meet the need to re-imagine what it means to be 'church' in the 21<sup>st</sup> century here in Kingswells; how best to structure our outreach to our community; how to make connections with others to develop community life and relationships; and to identify areas of need and support within the community so that our outreach is relevant and inclusive.

This will provide the basis for our consideration of church space, the relevance and appropriateness of location of existing premises, other community alternatives and locations, and the potential development of the existing site keeping in mind the current community use of our buildings.

The Kirk Session will provide a basis of its response to the Plan to the congregation for its consideration and comment and a meeting with the congregation will be arranged for further debate.

As is often the case, proposals for change provide both a challenge and an opportunity; it is our intention to focus our efforts on the opportunity to serve with greater relevance and energy as to what God has called us to do. (See also article on 'Beginnings of Radical Change' page)

What is not in doubt is a continuing need to serve our church in Kingswells in every way possible: through worship and prayer, through financial support, and the giving of our time and talents. **The church in Kingswells is its people doing the things well that Jesus has taught us to do.**

*Editor*

## GUILD

Our opening meeting of the Guild was a very happy occasion when all our members were given a tour of Orkney by courtesy of our minister, Laurene's beautiful photographs taken on her holiday there. Afterwards she was given a unique vote of thanks in the form of a 'goodie' bag which held numerous items either of a very Scottish or Guild nature. 'Laurene have you tried the 'mealie puddin' yet, or blown up the Guild balloons?' 'Joyce, you were truly inspired!'

Our October meeting was a talk by Jim Fiddes entitled, 'A Walk Along the Old Skene Road'. This proved to be a most interesting journey especially to those of our members who were brought up in the area. As I write we are now looking forward to our 'Lunch Meeting' on 26<sup>th</sup> December when we will be having a talk about the 'Friends of Gomal' by former Lord Provost Margaret Smith.

**Members and friends don't forget our Fish Supper Christmas Party on Tuesday 3 December at 7.30pm – this is always a happy and fun evening.** On Tuesday January 28 we will be entertained by Donald Grassie with Scottish music and other entertainment. Tuesday 25 February is our Guild Projects Update when we will find out a bit more about the projects the Guild is supporting and what progress is being made in raising funds for them. On Tuesday 24 March we will be learning more about the "Living Well Café' movement. The Living Well Cafes provide a welcoming, safe and supportive place for people living with dementia and/or memory problems and their caregivers.

*Chris Maxwell*



## PRAYER CHAIN

Kingswells Church Prayer Chain consists of a group of people who FIRMLY believe in the POWER of PRAYER. We undertake to pray for any prayer request brought to us. Any situation that causes sadness, anxiety or distress can be prayed for.

The chain has been asked to pray over many different situations over the years, nothing is too great or too small. Knowing that someone else cares to pray with you can bring a sense of comfort, relief and hope. Simply contact **Barbara Bruce 01224741558**, the minister or place a written request in the box situated in the church vestibule.

## NOSH AND NATTER

Put Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December in your diary - it's the date of the Nosh + Natter Christmas party! As well as party food and a glass of fizz we are looking forward to being entertained by the members of Music 4U. We enjoyed the singing and the charming personalities of the boys so much



back in March that we asked if they'd come to our Christmas party.

In fact, as the year draws to a close, we realise that we have a lot to be thankful for regarding Nosh + Natter and I would especially like to

thank all those who came along and supported us each month.



A big thank you too to the entertainers who were very varied and all excellent.

Of course, without the helpers we wouldn't be able to offer such an opportunity for people to get together and enjoy each other's company, so thank you. We have made new friends along the way and kept in touch with

old friends too. Many prayers have been answered in this past year and we thank God for his faithfulness and guidance.

We have a programme for 2020 which we hope will be varied and fun.

**January - Quiz and Raffle**

**February - Singer Donald Vass**

**March – In the Mood**

**April – North East Scotland Music School**

**May – All at C**

**June – Salvation Army Timbrals**

**July – Charlie House**

<p><b>Nosh + Natter</b></p> <p>lunch and entertainment</p> 	<p><b>Kingswells Church</b></p> <p>1st Wednesday of the Month</p> <p>12.30 - 2.30</p> <p>All Welcome</p>
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## **COMMUNITY QUOTES**

“Pull up a chair. Take a taste. Come join us. Life is so endlessly delicious.”

— **Ruth Reichl**

“I know there is strength in the differences between us. I know there is comfort, where we overlap.”

— **Ani DiFranco**

“Strength lies in differences, not in similarities”

— Stephen R. Covey

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee.”

— John Donne, No man is an island – A selection from the prose

“We speak not only to tell other people what we think, but to tell ourselves what we think. Speech is a part of thought.”

— Oliver Sacks, Seeing Voices

## YOUNG CHURCH

Over the last few months we have had very varied lessons in Young Church. We have read about some of the Judges like Deborah, Samson

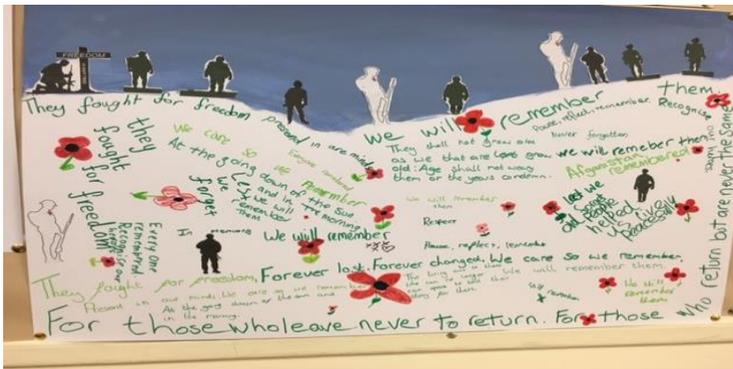
and Gideon, looked at the book of Revelation and thought about our Faith Heroes and also modern-day heroes. This is a picture we are still



working on which includes, Samson, The Apostle Paul, Moses, Daniel and some modern-day heroes like Nelson Mandela, Ruby Bridges and Malala Yousafzai.

We are now going into Advent and will be working on the Christmas Story and preparing our Nativity play for Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Hope to see you there!

**Remembrance Sunday** - We were delighted to be joined by Kingswells Brownies and Guides on Remembrance Sunday and together we made some pictures to honour and remember those who had lost their lives.



Just one last thing to say is a big thank you to all the members of Young Church who have joined us this year. It has been lovely to have you with us to learn about Jesus and other people in the Bible and we really value your input, your funny comments and your artistic skills.

*Anne Rodger*

*“Doing all the little tricky things it takes to grow up, step by step, into an anxious and unsettling world. Sylvia Plath*

## **MONEY MATTERS**

This report reflects the results to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

### **General Fund**

**Congregational income** - in 7 out of the 10 months to the end of October income from members failed to match that of the corresponding months in 2018 with the result that this income has declined by over £2,000.

**Other income** – we have been fortunate in that other income has exceeded expectations, particularly hire of rooms which has increased by almost £3,000. We also received a “one off” grant from Church of Scotland to help with the costs associated with the appointment of our new minister.

**Expenditure** – Overall expenditure in 2019 is over £10,000 higher than for the same period last year.

This is largely explained by the fact that we were in vacancy for only 4 months in 2019 compared to 9 months in 2018 during which time expenditure on several recurring items such as contributions to Church of Scotland, council tax and repairs to the manse were considerably less.

In addition, we had to meet the removal and settlement cost of the new minister which was partially offset by the “one off” grant mentioned above.

**Outcome** – our surplus for the first 10 months is therefore around £9,000 less than last year.

### **Other Funds**

**Special Fund** – there has been little activity in this fund

**Picture Fund** – This fund supports the monthly Nosh and Natter the success of which is reflected in the fact that the fund has only declined by a mere £200.

**Fabric Fund** – Despite the income received from the Peter Cook Trust the fabric fund is already showing a deficit of around £3,000. The manse is currently undergoing substantial maintenance and refurbishment. This is estimated to cost around £15,000 and will significantly reduce the balance on this fund.

**Outlook for the financial year** - assuming all the current maintenance and refurbishment is completed and paid for by 31<sup>st</sup> December we are possibly looking at an overall deficit of around £16,000.

**Budget for 2020** – A provisional budget has been set for 2020 in which it is hoped that the general fund may return a small surplus. However, since the fabric fund income largely depends on transfers from the general fund and further significant fabric expenditure is expected in 2020 it is difficult to see how we can return an overall surplus for 2020.

## BUILDINGS AND MAINTENANCE

As mentioned in the previous newsletter the manse has been the focus of attention over the last few weeks. Since completing the repairs to the utility room and kitchen floors, work has been ongoing to upgrade the interior - this has included; a new shower unit and flooring in the ensuite, new lighting in the hallway, laminate flooring in the hallway and master bedroom, and new interior doors throughout.

The manse garden has also seen some significant work completed, with new privacy fences to the south and west boundaries now installed. Some trees to the east boundary are scheduled for removal due to damage they are causing to an adjacent boundary-supporting wall; the new fence will then be extended to regain privacy.

The joinery work to church halls doors and windows is now complete, with paintwork planned for springtime next year.

Once again, I would like to thank everyone on the Fabric & Finance team for their assistance and support over the last twelve months.

*Mike Reid*

### **Christian Aid says UK has a moral obligation to help end global poverty as it publishes its 2019 election manifesto**

Christian Aid has launched its 2019 manifesto, demanding politicians take urgent action to tackle climate and economic injustice and to build peace; helping end poverty and create a fair and sustainable world ahead of the forthcoming UK general election on 12 December.

Among its demands, the UK-based international charity urges all political parties to:

- **Work for climate justice** and take urgent action to address the climate crisis in a way which improves the lives for the poorest, backed by investment and international leadership. This would include ending all support for fossil

fuel extraction; regulating and encouraging UK banks and investors to divest from fossil fuel investment in line with the Paris Agreement; and ruling out international offsets in law, which offload the UK's own emission reduction responsibilities onto poorer countries.

- **Work for economic justice**, addressing the unfair distribution of wealth in the world. This would include demanding that power is shifted from institutions such as the IMF, the OECD and World Bank and towards the more equal United Nations; and reforming the current UK tax rules that continue to allow tax abuse and avoidance which rob poor countries of the money they need to invest in poverty alleviation. It would also include retaining the commitment to spend 0.7% of GNI for foreign aid and development and ensuring that this money is spent as well as possible, retaining DFID as a standalone department.
- **Tackle violence and build peace**. This should include committing to increase the UK's funding of global peacekeeping to more than 1.5% via the United Nations Security Council; immediately suspending arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates due to the risks of these being used against civilians in Yemen, and improving the overall regulation of the arms trade; expanding the refugee resettlement schemes by increasing the number of Syrian children and families allowed into the UK; and providing impartial funding in areas of conflict like Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to hold all parties to account for violations under international law.

Daisy-Rose Srblin, Christian Aid's Senior UK Advocacy Adviser, said: "At a time of considerable change and turmoil, it is critical we ask those in power to play a positive global role, and create a just and sustainable world. We know that poverty is inherently political and structural power imbalances continue to rob people of dignity and voice. The UK

is still the second biggest historical emitter of greenhouse gases per capita and now has a moral duty to set an example and lead the way to net-zero as soon as possible, while helping other nations to develop in a sustainable way and adapt to continuing changing environments.

“Despite global wealth continuing to rise, poverty persists. Governments, the private sector and wider civil society all have a crucial part to play in building just and sustainable economies so everyone cannot only survive but also thrive.

“Finally, it is important to remember that the UK does not have a good reputation as a peacemaker and continues to sell arms to the Saudi-led coalition, despite numerous violations of humanitarian law. This is our opportunity to take positive action and prioritise peace over war.

“As we approach a UK general election, it is critical that we ask those seeking to lead our nation to pledge to help people living in poverty. The UK has a moral obligation to the world’s poorest people to act. It is a matter of justice.”

“Brexit is bound to dominate this election, and itself may affect the poorest in the UK and beyond, but we need to remind candidates asking for our votes that the scandal of international poverty is something millions of us care deeply about.”

**Luke Harman, Christian Aid’s Campaigns Manager, has said: “A general election offers a great opportunity for us to stand together with our sisters and brothers living in poverty around the world, and to ensure their voices are raised up and heard by people in power.”**

**PLEASE CONSIDER THESE ISSUES AS YOU GO TO VOTE ON 12 DECEMBER – THANK YOU**

*Christian Aid Web Site*

*“No one has ever become poor by giving.”*  
— *Anne Frank, diary of Anne Frank: the play*

## Church of Scotland – the Beginnings of Radical Change



Meeting in Edinburgh on 21 November at the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh, commissioners gave their support to a report from the Assembly Trustees recommending the merger of the four central councils into two new agencies.

They are provisionally named the 'Faith Nurture Forum' - a merger of the Ministries Council and the Mission and Discipleship Council--and the 'Faith Impact Forum', a merger of the Church and Society Council and the World Mission Council. They will begin work on 1 January 2020.

The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, convener of the Assembly Trustees, said: ***"We have to understand and embrace the fact that change may be the only constant.***

***"As we have crept closer to this first and very modest change in our structure, it has become increasingly clear that while everyone wants change; mostly, people want change on their own terms.***

***"Each of us has to be the change we want to see in our Church.***

***“And we need to adopt a new way of working – a way that is more effective, more efficient and more targeted on the growth of the local Church.”***

### **Radical change agenda**

Calling on the Church to embrace cultural change, Dr Chalmers said staff should be empowered to deliver the work they were skilled to do without micromanagement. He added that staff should take steps to work across departments as a "unified workforce supporting one another" in order to deliver the work of the General Assembly.

The first task of the new agencies will be to take a detailed look at the work currently being done and make recommendations for the future. This will include what work should be discontinued, what should continue and what might better be devolved to Presbyteries. The 2019 General Assembly instructed the Trustees to achieve a reduction in central administration costs of 20%-30%.

At the same time the structure of Presbyteries is undergoing reforms with the goal of reducing the number from 45 to around 12. That work is already underway and overtures on Presbytery mergers are expected to go to the 2020 General Assembly. The Commission also discussed the importance of devolving responsibilities to Presbyteries, although that work cannot be completed until Presbytery reforms are in place.

***“The overall priority is that the centre must serve the local,”*** Dr Chalmers said.

"For the first time the administration of the central agencies of the Church all fall under the management of a Chief Officer so that there will be no licence for work to be done in separate silos and at least twice a year these Forums and the Assembly Trustees, the Ecumenical Relations Committee, the Theological Forum and others who may be involved in the consolidation of our work or in the reforming of our structures will meet on the same day, sharing their work and learning from one another."



## **HAVE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**

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**(Scottish Charity Number SC006865)**