

KINGSWELLS PARISH CHURCH



ADVENT NEWSLETTER 2021

Contacts

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(Scottish Charity Number SC006865)

**AS A MEMBER, THIS NEWSLETTER CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION
FOR YOU ABOUT OUR FUTURE**

FROM OUR INTERIM MODERATOR

Rev Edward McKenna – St Nicholas South of Kincorth

First of all, can I thank the Kirk Session and the outgoing Minister for their welcome and support.

As Interim Moderator my role in the first instance is to offer support and some guidance with Vacancy Matters only, and when Laurene leaves towards the end of November, to be involved in all other matters with regards to the Vacancy. In this of course I will be taking part in the Ministers Group from the Aberdeen West Grouping of Ministers, and they will be supporting me in this new role and will be providing the necessary “cover” for services and funerals.

Clearly, this has been, and continues to be, a very challenging time for the wider church, for the Presbytery of Aberdeen and of course for all of you here in Kingswells. Sadly, Laurene has decided to move to a new Charge in Edinburgh and there are many various reasons behind her decision.

I want to offer the Kirk Session and indeed all of you my prayers and some practical support moving forwards. To that end I have started visiting the elders, past and present. You will appreciate that such a commitment will take some time, given my work at my home church, but I’m sure this response will be appreciated. It will take time to listen and to learn and to offer, I hope, a reassuring and pastoral ear to the journey that you as a fellowship have had and a move forward with confidence and hope.

As I write it is still too early to say what the outcome of the discussions with Presbytery will be; however, I think it is clear that Kingswells will not be able to seek to appoint its own minister and some kind of Union with a neighbouring congregation is therefore to be explored.

The matter of the Church Building and Manse is subject to Presbytery producing its plan for buildings going forward and I know the subcommittee looking at this meets today November 8th as I write.

I want to offer all members of the congregation an opportunity to raise any issues with me, or to seek any support or guidance that I can give and so I shall

be arranging a series of old style “Vestry Hours” where I shall be at the church for a designated time to be available for you. The time and dates of these are to be arranged as soon as is practical. You can of course contact me on my Church of Scotland E Mail EmcKenna@churchofscotland.org.uk

As we move into the time of Remembrance and then shortly afterwards to Advent and Christmas, let us hold on to the Light of Jesus, he who is “the Light who Shines in the Darkness” and rest assured “that the darkness has never overcome it “

May you know something of the Peace of Christ this winter

Eddie McKenna

FROM REV LAURENE LAFONTAINE

Dear members and friends of Kingswells Parish Church,

As I prepare to move to Edinburgh responding to God’s call to serve as minister of Broughton St.Mary’s Parish Church and Community Hub, I had hoped for a more interactive time with you and the congregation. Unfortunately, the need to be signed off by my GP to recover from the long-term exposure to toxic fumes in the manse has made that impossible. Change is always challenging especially when sense of call which brought me to Kingswells seemed so dynamic in April 2019.

I have always been honest and direct with you. Given my unhappiness with the manse situation during these past two and half years, along the growing incapability of an implicit leadership model long practiced, it became clear that I had completed the work that I was able to do at Kingswells. The impact of Covid did not help matters.

I am grateful for those times spent with many of you. I do count it a privilege to have been a part of your lives as individuals and a congregation. As I said at the Presbytery, I have learned a great deal about parish ministry, unique to the Church of Scotland and Scottish culture. There have been significant lessons

and insights gained as a result of our many interactions. I am simply sorry that we could not work through the historic issues, as I had hoped.

I am grateful for those positive and engaging connections, the desire to try new ideas and attempt to build life giving community within our congregation and the Kingswells community. You know who you are. Thank you.

Life is full of twists and turns, only God knows the future. God is calling us as members of the Christian community to be willing to transcend the worn out and broken ways of being church, be bold in our faith and risk living out the Gospel as Jesus did through life giving and caring relationships. I trust that God will continue to guide you in your faith and in your desire to be church together. Please know that you are in my prayers during transition.

I am currently on Iona and will return to Kingswells on the 12th. I am finally beginning to feel like myself again with my health is returning. I am truly sorry as I know that my poor health and struggle to recover from the spring bout of shingles limited my pastoral ability and presence. Thank you for your prayers. My hope is to move to Edinburgh on Monday 22 November with the induction service as minister of Broughton St. Mary's Thursday 2 December.

May you and yours experience the fullness of God's love and blessing.

Peace, Laurene

Should there be any issues arising from this letter that concern you please feel free to contact the Interim Moderator at EMcKenna@churchofscotland.org.uk

Editor

FROM OUR SESSION CLERK

Changes and Challenges

Since the last newsletter was issued in July 2021 we have been reminded of the saying "the only thing permanent around here is change".

We re-opened for in-person worship on Sunday 5th September, and it was wonderful to see so many of you back in church on that day, and over the last

few weeks. We hope to see even more people return as we all become more used to going out and mixing.

On 12th September Laurene informed the Kirk Session and the congregation that she had been invited to preach as Sole Nominee at Broughton St Mary's Church in Edinburgh. While this news was disappointing, the Session had been aware that Laurene had experienced difficulties in settling in the north-east. The combination of lockdowns and a period of ill health had added to the pressures. Laurene has been on sick leave since early October and is now utilising the remainder of her annual leave prior to moving to Edinburgh in late November. At her last service on 10th October Laurene was formally thanked for her ministry at Kingswells and presented with two books – 'The Book of Joy' by Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, and 'The Hill We Climb' by Amanda Gorman. Her induction at Broughton St Mary's will take place on 2nd December, and we wish her every happiness in her new charge.

In the meantime, the Ministry Team in our Parish Grouping will be undertaking pastoral cover and will be taking part in worship occasionally, supported by other supply ministers.

Rev. Eddie McKenna has been appointed as Interim Moderator to guide the Kirk Session through the coming months. We have already had two meetings with Rev. McKenna and were greatly encouraged by his support, and we look forward to him preaching at Kingswells to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion on Sunday 9 January 2022 at 11.00am.

The decisions taken at this year's General Assembly will mean a reduction in the numbers of Ministry posts in the Church of Scotland from around 1000 to 600. This means that in Aberdeen and Shetland Presbytery the number of posts will be cut from 37 to 24. In effect this means that we will not be permitted to call a new minister to replace Laurene. The Kirk Session has met with a representative from the Planning and Deployment Committee of Aberdeen and Shetland Presbytery on 9th November, when we discussed the new Presbytery Plan being prepared and how this will affect Kingswells Church. There is no doubt that there are major challenges facing the church across Scotland: however, we have all experienced big changes before, and with the

support of the many highly committed people within the congregation we look forward to a positive outcome from these discussions.

Because of the move to a vacancy, I have agreed to resume duties as Session Clerk to ensure there is continuity in the church administration. I look forward to seeing many of you back in church so that 'you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith' (Romans 1:12).

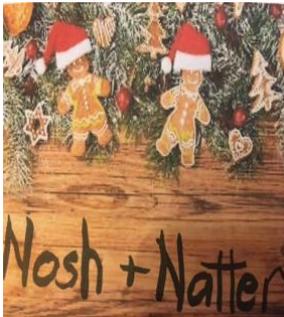
Lorna Graham, Session Clerk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER AT 10.50AM
REV AMY BENDER**

**WORSHIP DURING NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER
WILL BE LED BY REV BOB BROWN**



**You are welcome to join us at the
Christmas Nosh + Natter Lunch Club
on Wednesday 1st December
at 12.30 in the halls.**

Come along and get Christmas celebrations off to a good start by enjoying Festive food and Bubbles, a Santa Beetle Drive and raffle. Please join us and enjoy a time of chatting and catching up with friends old and new.

All are welcome.



Community Carol Service

*Come and join us for the Community Carol Service
Friday 10th December at 7.15pm, in the Community Centre, sing
along to the Bon Accord Silver band and enjoy mulled wine and
mince pies.*

SENIOR'S CAROL SERVICE

This will take place by invitation in the Church Halls on
Sunday 12th December at 2.30pm

Christingle



**TAKES PLACE ON CHRISTMAS
EVE AT 6.00 PM.**

We look forward to welcoming everyone to join in this popular service. As usual we will make Christingles to represent God's love for the world and sing hymns and Christmas songs. We'll be ready with our oranges and our sweets and look forward to seeing your creations. Families and people of all ages find that this is an enjoyable way to celebrate Jesus' birth on the night before Christmas.

**CHRISTMAS EVE WATCHNIGHT SERVICE AT
CRAIGIEBUCKLER WITH MANNOFIELD AT 11.30PM**

**CHRISTMAS SERVICE
SUNDAY 26 DECEMBER AT 11.00AM**

FOODBANK COLLECTIONS
EVERY TUESDAY FROM 10.00 TO 10.30AM

**Pasta/rice and sauce, Canned soup, Canned meat/fish, Tinned meals,
Beans, Canned fruit/puddings, Tea/Coffee, Cereal, Bread, Milk,
Biscuits**

Donations of any of these items helps feed a person for a few days and alleviate food poverty in Aberdeen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
SUNDAY 9 JANUARY 2022 AT 11.00AM
INTERIM MODERATOR – REV EDWARD MCKENNA

OUR PASTORAL CARE

Hopefully you are all keeping well as we slowly emerge out of the many constraints to our way of life enforced upon us over the last 18 months. In person Sunday services have resumed and have been well received and well supported.

The pastoral care committee had our first face to face meeting for over a year in October and I am pleased to share the news that volunteer replacements for the recent retirements were identified. We are still in the process of reviewing the final positions but at this point in time the situation is as below. In the last newsletter we announced the retirements and now we can announce the replacements. Since then, Audrey Paterson has recently announced her retirement and we would like to express our thanks for her dedication and commitment in her many roles as Pastoral care Co-convener, Area Co-ordinator and Visitor. We wish Audrey all the best wishes for the future.

Marjorie Birkmyre is replaced by Rosemary Clark (Area Co-ordinator role) and Joyce Taylor (Visitor role); Val Henderson is replaced by Gillian Cursiter; and Audrey Paterson is replaced by Audrey Walker. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to Rosemary, Joyce, Gillian, and Audrey for offering to become members of the pastoral care committee.

However, we are always keen to identify new visitors to help ease the burden on existing visitors so if you are interested, please either contact your current visitor or myself to discuss your interest. At our recent meeting, you will be pleased to learn that all things being well, we will be able to host a **Senior Carol Service again and it will be held on SUNDAY 12TH DECEMBER AT 2.30PM.**

The name and contact number of your respective visitor will be attached to this newsletter and should you have a need of pastoral care, please contact your visitor or myself on the telephone number below and arrangements will be made with a minister to arrange a visit/contact phone call.

Take care and stay safe.

Mike Gall, Pastoral Care Committee Convenor, Tel: 01224 742910



PRAYER CHAIN

As part of our commitment to all in the church we undertake to pray for any prayer request that you may have. Jesus said ask and it will be given. We truly believe in the power of prayer and Christian healing through Jesus Christ. Whatever your need it is neither too great nor too small for God. He is our FATHER in heaven and He loves us.

GOD LISTENS: GOD HEARS: GOD ACTS.

If you need prayer support, contact Barbara Bruce 01224741558

Christmas Giving Project



This Christmas, we are collecting special treats to be donated to **Instant Neighbour** and distributed to people experiencing food poverty in Aberdeen. Treats for all ages such as chocolates, boxes of fancy biscuits, delicious cake, selection boxes - just something tasty that all age groups can enjoy. Let's make someone's Christmas that little bit special by letting them know we are thinking about them. **Items can be brought to church on Sundays during Advent or dropped off at the foodbank collection point on a Tuesday 10 - 10.30.**

PRESBYTERY NEWS

The November Presbytery meeting provided an opportunity for Presbytery Elder, Lorna Graham, to formally record our thanks to Laurene for her service at Kingswells.

The Planning and Deployment Committee confirmed that they are continuing to work on the preparation of a new five year plan to take account of the decisions made at the General Assembly to reduce the number of ministers. This will also have an impact on the numbers of buildings required, and the new Presbytery Mission Plan will mean that buildings will be classed as to be retained beyond the five years of the Plan or to be disposed of during the lifetime of the five-year Plan.

Planning is also continuing to create a Presbytery of the North East which will include the Presbyteries of Aberdeen and Shetland, Gordon, Kincardine and Deeside Buchan, Orkney and part of Moray. The aim is for this new N.E. Presbytery to operate from 2023.

Session Clerk

ABERDEEN WEST PARISH GROUPING

The Aberdeen West Parish Grouping was launched on Sunday August 29th at the final online Aberdeen West joint service. A Steering Committee has been formed to take the Grouping forward.

The benefits of being part of the Grouping will be demonstrated over the next few months, as we receive prayerful support and practical assistance from the ministers at Craigiebuckler, Cults, Mannofield and Peterculter.

Session Clerk

MESSAGE FROM OUR TREASURER

At the best of times, it is difficult to forecast, even at this late stage in the financial year, as to what the final outturn will be at the end of the year but

with all the uncertainty surrounding the future of Kingswells Church it is more difficult than ever.

Having said that it certainly looks as if this year the overall deficit across all funds will be in the region of £2 to £3K which is a vast improvement on last year's overall deficit of £16,930.

However, to achieve that figure of £2K to £3K we must maintain our level of giving and restrict our levels of expenditure. Thankfully most of our expenditure is readily identifiable but we are always exposed to unexpected repair costs on either or both the church and the manse. Several such potential costs have been identified but are most likely to fall within the next financial year 2022 for which, even setting a budget, is currently proving difficult as we still await details of how our major item of expenditure, the Ministry and Mission contribution to the central church, will be affected by the absence of a full-time minister.

As mentioned above it is essential that for the financial wellbeing of Kingswells Church the members of the congregation continue their regular giving. This is, by definition, dependent on the current members remaining united as a congregation and resisting the temptation to leave perhaps to join any neighbouring church.

During the pandemic the majority members who contributed by way of freewill envelopes agreed to switch their method of giving to that of standing order. We are most grateful not only that they did so then but that they continue to do so now. There now remain only around half a dozen who have currently decided not to switch and because it is not viable to order such a small number of envelopes, I would encourage those members to think about switching to standing order which, just like freewill envelopes, can be paid weekly if that is the donor's preference.

As a national church and as a congregation we are going through a time which will test our faith but the Bible and indeed history has many examples of faith being tested both individually and collectively. Those who were tested, often not without difficulty, remained true.

Now it is our turn – let us not be found wanting.

Jim Henderson Treasurer

BUILDINGS AND MAINTENANCE

Since my last report we have now returned to worship in the church and halls, and there have been a few small issues that have come to light that will need some attention. The heating boiler for the halls has needed to be repaired and this has now been done, the sound system also needed to be repaired and we have a temporary system in place until this is completed. The church organ will also undergo some general maintenance shortly. Our internet connection has been restored.

Apart from the items above, there is just the usual routine maintenance associated with the church, Halls and Manse to be getting on with.

Mike Reid

THE GUILD



The Guild is up and running again and has had its first meeting on 20th October.

Further meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of each month at 2.00pm:

17 November 2021

15 December 2021

19 January 2022

Our own Judith Lorimer will be presenting her skill at Floral Arranging at our November meeting. Our December meeting will meet with our own Jennifer Taylor who will demonstrate further skills in making Table Runners and Christmas Stockings.

Continuing the three-year, themed cycle of work which has seen the national Guild members reach record levels of giving, (see below) the focus of the Guild's work is to journey together with our communities, nation, and world, both in sharing our faith and resources, and in doing everything in our power to bring about positive change. The Projects the Guild will be supporting for the next three years are:

The Home for Good is a Christian charity who are passionate about finding a home for every child who needs one. They work to inspire people to think about fostering and adoption. They also equip the Church to welcome these families and help support people on their journeys.

Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity. They exist to end the pain and suffering caused by eating disorders.

UNIDA – which means "together" in Portuguese – is at the forefront of pioneering education that transforms the lives of young Brazilians and develops future leadership for faith communities and for the wider society.

Starchild was founded by Michaela Foster Marsh, who set up the charity in memory of her adopted Ugandan brother, Frankie Marsh. Finding the Light in Every Child project will address the challenges of stigma and myths related to intellectual and physical disability in Uganda.

Vine Trust is an international development charity, established in 1985 by the church community in Bo'ness as a response to the famine in Ethiopia.

Chocolate Heaven is a small chocolate kitchen on a beautiful island in South East Asia, where Paul and Sarah, their children and their wider team, demonstrate the love of God to an unreached people group.

The money raised for the 2018 – 2021 projects is as follows:

Total money raised: £551,434.70

- CrossReach: £103,123.34
- Sailors' Society: £84,555.46
- Boys' Brigade: £93,853.57
- World Mission: £84,874.10
- Malawi Fruits: £86,837.29
- Free to Live Trust: £98,190.94

Chris Maxwell

Christmas Angels



These are just some of the angels from last year ready to be hung around the village for people to find and take home – a gift from us with a special Christmas message attached. We are knitting this year's angels and getting ready to surprise the Kingswells community once again.

If you enjoy knitting and would like to knit a few to increase the host of angels, we would be delighted to pass the pattern onto you. The angels usually go out in the middle of December so there's still time to get the pins out. If you would like a pattern sent to you, please email annerodger48@gmail.com or pick one up from the church.



Used Stamps



Please collect all your used stamps and donate them to a good cause. The Guild will pass them onto the World Mission Stamp Project to be sold and the money used for their charities. Please leave an inch of envelope round the stamp, pop them in an envelope and leave in the basket at the entrance to the church. As we are all anticipating lots of Christmas mail this is a great time to start collecting and getting your stamps to a good cause that really appreciates your help.



COP26 – A MOMENT THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE WORLD

Moments are fleeting. They ask only for your presence and if you offer that, simply that, a moment can take hold in your heart and change you forever. Fleeting they may be, but moments have the power to leave an indelible mark. A moment might change the world.

We are in the middle of COP26 as this is written. It is a turning-point, a turning-round moment, it is one the world has waited for. Glasgow is hosting a moment that will leave an indelible mark – for good or ill. Be in no doubt, this climate conference is one of the last moments we have as a global neighbourhood to commit to the changes necessary to avert the worst effects of climate change. There is no other moment – the time is now.



Grasp this moment and give it your all!

The ones suffering most who had least to do with it are here to tell us their truths. The ones not here yet, whose every moment depends on what we do in ours, will look back on this time and say, ‘thank you’ or ‘why?’ Embrace the moment, be present and participate – this moment might change the world.

In this moment, let us listen for the word of God ...

The still, small voice ... the whisper to your heart, the silent stir in your soul...

This moment, let us listen for the word of God ... What is He telling you?

Our children leading the way, our sisters and brothers sharing their lived-truths, prophets pounding the streets...

In this moment, let us be challenged to listen for the word of God ...

The new idea, the disturbing insight, the uncomfortable question – ‘are you willing to let go of your privilege, your power, your possessions?’

The world whispers, “Listen, God is speaking. You don’t want to miss this.”

Something to pray

Holy One,

From the primordial gases to the end of time, you have been there, journeying with this good earth to bring your salvation of abundant life for all.

Thank you for being with us and never giving up on us.

I truly regret the times when I have tunnelled my vision, forgotten your story, and acted in fear.

Help me to be open to your Spirit that I may see and remember myself, others, and this planet to be within your story of salvation.

Use this memory to empower me to work as your partner bringing abundant life for all.

Enrich me by remembering, honouring, and drawing wisdom from the stories of those who are oppressed, that their experiences may bend my perception towards your justice and hope.

In this day ahead open my ears and my hands, to see and serve your salvation on earth.

In the name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Taken and adapted from the Christian Aid Scotland website - Editor

Over 5 million pounds raised!



It feels so good to share with you the amazing news that Christian Aid Week donations have peaked at over 5 million pounds! We never fail to be surprised, delighted and grateful for the partnership of churches, volunteers and communities across the UK and Ireland. **Thank you.**