

The Lord be with you. **And also with you!** Good to be back with you once more. Sandra and I enjoyed our few days away at Crieff. The only sad aspect of going to this old drovers' town is the decline in its retail on the high street. Many shops have closed even since last year, with more charity shops taking up the empty outlets. We simply relaxed, went walks, sat and read, enjoyed our evening meals in the restaurant. On the last morning, before we left to go north to see Sarah and Duncan, we had breakfast with Sandra's sister Jill and husband Neil who were just arriving for their pre-Christmas break.

Then we stopped off in Banchory which Sandra and I hadn't visited since we left the area over five years ago. Once again the decline in the High Street was noticeably with many long-standing shops gone. We had lunch at the Raemoir Garden Centre, an enterprise started by a local GP, Dr Mair, and which must be the biggest tourist attraction and money-maker in the area. It is enormous and presently set out for Christmas.

Next was our visit to Finzean. Here the surprise was not decline but *growth!* The number of new properties built and inhabited in the years we have been away was unexpected. We parked at the church to visit the new local cemetery that I dedicated on my wedding anniversary in 2010, and found the grave of Alison Farquharson; nearby the grave of her son's father-in-law, Alistair Rose, who died only days after her, and also of Annie Duncan, an elderly lady, the wife of the owner of the local sawmill and who was our 'next-door-neighbour', whose death we had not heard about.

We visited Sir Angus Farquharson at his home on the estate being looked after by his daughter Jean. It was so sad to see him in his incapacity; unable to move, but still able to speak though not at length. We showed him pictures of our children and grandchildren, remembering that when we first arrived in Finzean, Jonathan was 10, Adam was 7 and Sarah was only 2!

Then it was on to Inverurie where we were staying in a B&B. I first visited this town when I was 19 as an officer with the 8th Greenock BB company on a summer camp billeted in the local primary school. But as with Banchory we hadn't visited it since leaving the area. Being a larger town it still conveyed a sense of prosperity, but even here shops had come and gone.

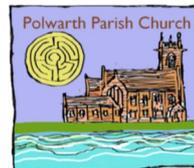
We visited Sarah at her remote cottage just outside Chapel of Garioch at Pitcapel and she took us by car to Alford to see her brand new school, known as the Alford Community Campus, combining nursery, primary and secondary schools and community resources such as library, swimming pool and theatre in the one building. We visited her classroom and Sandra was impressed with the high-tech Smartboard she used for admin and teaching purposes.

We arrive home on the Saturday evening and I was up and off to Greenock on Sunday morning to bring Sandra's mum, Sadie, through to stay a week and let her meet her new great-grandchild. Yesterday I was back in Greenock taking Sadie home and picking up my mum to come and stay with us for the same purpose this week! Phew! Guess where I will be next Saturday?!

Until next week... **The Lord bless you and keep you.**



Learning
in
the
light
of
knowledge
Moving in the Love of God



INTIMATIONS

Sunday 27th November 2016

POLWARTH PARISH CHURCH

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Welcome: A warm welcome is extended to all, especially those who are worshipping at Polwarth as a visitor or returning after an absence. We thank you for choosing to join us today and trust you will be comfortable in our midst and with our style of worship.

Today's Service: The service will be conducted by our minister, **Jack Holt**, and members of the congregation. It is the First Sunday of Advent. We will light the first candle on the Advent Wreath and display the first pieces of the Nativity scene. The gospel that shall guide the preaching over the coming Christian Year is Matthew and the theme for today is: *Advent – Waiting in Hope*. The Service will also include the celebration of the Sacrament of Communion.

Musical Accompaniment: **Dr Lance Whitehead**, our Director of Music, will provide the accompaniment to our praise as well as enhance our worship with his choices of music:

Organ Prelude: Malcolm Archer, Prelude on 'Bristol' ('Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes'); **Choir anthem:** 'Carol of the Advent', traditional Besançon carol tune, words by Eleanor Farjeon; **Music while the elements are shared:** Mary Beth Bennet: Prelude on 'Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen' (German traditional carol tune); **Postlude:** Léon Boëllmann: 'Menuet Gothique' (from *Suite Gothique*, op.25).

Invitation to Tea: After the service the congregation is invited to the Hall to share in the hospitality provided by our Tea Teams. Please do join us and enhance our fellowship and our enjoyment. *Donations can be given to offset the costs involved.*

Murray Aisle (*to your right at the front as you sit*): The chapel area is set aside for quiet and personal prayer and reflection at any time.

Large print versions of the Order of Service and Intimation sheets are available. Please ask someone on welcome duty if you require one.

Visual Presentation

The service is presented visually on the screen, but some written Orders of Service are in the Vestry for those who wish to take them to our housebound members.

Next Sunday

The service at 11am will be conducted by the minister, **Jack**, and Probationer Minister, **Allan**. It will be the Second Sunday in Advent. We will light the second candle on the Advent Wreath and display more pieces of the Nativity scene. The theme is: **Advent – Preparing of Peace**.

Daily Readings for the week beginning 28 November.

Mon: Isaiah 4:2-6; Psalm 122:1-4, 8-9;
Matthew 8:5-11.

Tues: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72: 1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17;
Luke 10:21-24.

Wed: Isaiah 25:6-10; Psalm 23; Matthew 15:29-37.

Thurs: Isaiah 26:1-6; Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27;
Matthew 7:21, 24-27.

Fri: Isaiah 29:17-24; Psalm 27: 1, 4, 13-14;
Matthew 9:27-31.

Sat: Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Psalm 147:1-6;
Matthew 9:35–10:1, 6-8.

TWO IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE DIARY!

16 December at 7pm in the Church

For the third year Jack will produce an evening of **Music and Movies for Christmas** but this year in partnership with our Director of Music, Lance Whitehead, who will be arranging the musical programme which this year will include performances from the Craiglockhart School Junior Choir! This is a fun evening for all ages with refreshments provided in the interval, with donations going to our *Float the Boat* Fund. So please get busy inviting your family, neighbours and friends to join you for a free social occasion at Christmas!

18 December at 4pm, outside in the Church Garden

We again host a community carol singing event, using the carols sheet provided by *EMBRACE the Middle East*. Last year it had limited success, not well supported even by the congregation (why not?). This year can we not get enthusiastic and encourage all our friends, neighbours, all whom we come in contact with, to come and make a crowd that can sing with joy the carols of Christmas?!

Storage: In order to comply with Fire and Insurance regulations with storage, the Property Team are reviewing the storage of items in the basement, crypt and tower ahead of the inventory in the new year. After speaking to the relevant persons, old and damaged items not in use will be removed. If you have any personal items stored, please let Dawn know so these can be identified and storage confirmed. Thank you.

Fairtrade: £285 commission made over the last year is to be sent to the Traidcraft Exchange charity in Gateshead. Thank you to everyone who has purchased items from the Honesty Table. Today is the last chance to buy the sale and return Christmas cards; a few sale packs will remain. It is still not too late to order from the catalogues – see Dawn. Thank you for your support in 2016. Global Concerns

Fire Training: The Property Team has arranged fire training after the service on Sunday 4th December in the Small Hall from 12.20 – 12.50pm for Elders and Fire Wardens not directly involved in the first fire drill. Written information will be supplied. Please let Dawn know if you can attend. Training will be arranged in January for those not able to attend. If any congregation member would like to be a Fire Warden, please see Dawn. Thank you.

Helping the Homeless: I received this text from a Mary Dugan: Dear Rev Holt, I hope you won't mind this approach but I live locally and sing with a little group called the Dovecot Singers. We would be grateful if you could give publicity, in any way, to our forthcoming fundraising event at St Catharine's convent. I am aware that your parish already supports much wonderful work in the community, both at home and afar and we hope that this event which we are organising, in addition to providing a seasonally reflective occasion, will also help bring in some much needed financial support for St Catharine's Homeless Project at this time of the year...as Edinburgh freezes over! **St Catharine's Convent, Lauriston Gardens, Tuesday 13th December, 7.30pm.** An Advent evening of reflection through poetry and Christmas music with **The Dovecot Singers**. There will be a retiral collection in support of St Catharine's Homeless Project.

The Guild meets TOMORROW at the earlier time of 7.15pm. Our Speakers will be Fred and Rita Daniels who will give an illustrated talk on China. All are welcome.

Advent Calendar: This year the Church of Scotland is again running its daily video Advent Calendar with a short message from people involved in the ministries of the Church beginning and ending the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Rev Russell Barr. This year it can be followed from our *own website!* www.polwarth.org.uk Click on the 'News' tab at the top of the Homepage and then click on the item ADVENT CALENDAR. Presently the page shows a countdown clock as it will not go live until 1 December. Please let your friends on social media know about this.

The next choir rehearsal will take place in the church on Sunday 4 December, 0930–1030, with a rehearsal for the 'music and movies' night for the last 15 minutes.

Seeking light in dark times ----a candlelit labyrinth walk
Wednesday 30 November at 7.30pm in Polwarth Sanctuary facilitated by Rev. Canon Frances Burberry. The experience may offer a renewed sense of well-being/inner peace or be a path to focus on a particular question or issue, meditation or prayer.

Christmas Soup Lunch Sunday 11th December: We invite the congregation to the Polwarth Christmas Lunch, Sunday 11th December. Please sign up at the back of church to help with planning. Donations taken on the day will cover costs and to raise funds: £100 to provide Caroline & the children in Zambia with a Christmas Lunch, Catering costs when we do a Bethany & church funds. (May we suggest a minimum £5). Global Concerns Team