

The Lord be with you. **And also with you!** Recently, on Thursday, 24 November, I was joined by Charlotte and Dawn, representing Polwarth at the Edinburgh location of the *On The Road* roadshows the Church of Scotland had organised across the country. Sixteen locations from London to Kirkwall and from Fort Augustus to Bo'ness had been visited to hear from the local and regional church across the country.

In the words of the organisers: *We are going 'On the Road' this autumn running a series of day and evening events across the country to listen to the voice of people in the local Church – to hear your views on what we need to do to enable a flourishing Church into the 2020s and beyond.*

The key words for me in that statement were: 'to listen'. Why these words are key dates back to a General Assembly I attended back in 2001. That was the year the Church accepted completely and unanimously the *Church Without Walls* report that was to have such a prophetic and concrete impact on the future direction and shape of the Church.

One of the major proposals at the heart of the report was that, organisationally, the Church needed to turn itself on its head. At that time policies were been created by the Boards and Committees of the Church, which were then handed down to Presbyteries, instructed to make sure they were implemented in the local congregations.

But *Church Without Walls* stated that in the future the *local congregations* should be the implementers of policy and their needs and requirements to do so were to be fed *upwards* into presbyteries, who would make these known to the Boards and Councils, whose jobs, as servants of the Church, were to provide whatever resources the local congregations needed.

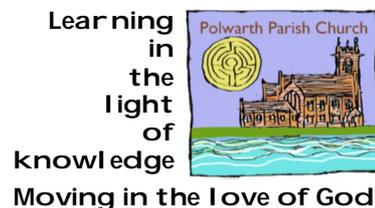
So these roadshows seemed to indicate that *fifteen years* later, this central plank of that influential report was finally been adhered to.

And at the start of the day that did seem to be the case with round table discussions on what the local churches needed to retain and what they needed to let go of, in order to do mission in context across the country.

BUT! In the afternoon there was a shift in how the meeting was conducted. Last year at the General Assembly the Ministries Council (those responsible for the recruitment, selection, training and deployment of ministers) brought forward a proposal for the Church to consider setting up what they called *Hub Ministry*. Basically it is a model that does two things: 1) it brings a number of congregations together *but* not through union and linkages, but rather through their complementary approaches to mission; and 2) it reduces the need to have one minister *per* congregation.

In the afternoon those attending (and this would be true of all locations) were being asked to discuss the merits of this approach, and what would need to happen to allow this model to be implemented locally. In other words the local was being listened to **BUT** only in order to gain their support for a vision begun in the Boards and Committees and not at the local level.

So I left the gathering disappointed; I had hoped that it was the views and examples of what the local were presently seeking to be and achieve that would truly shape the future of the Church of Scotland in Scotland. Until next week... **The Lord bless you and keep you.**



INTIMATIONS Sunday 4th December 2016

POLWARTH PARISH CHURCH

36-38 Polwarth Terrace
Edinburgh
EH11 1LU

Church Administrator: Amy Wilkins
Tel 0131 346 2711 office@polwarth.org.uk
www.polwarth.org.uk

 www.facebook.com/polwarthparishchurch

Office Hours:

Tuesday 9am–1pm
Friday 2pm–6pm
Saturday 10am–1pm

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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 Allan**, the probationer minister and members of the congregation. It is 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.**

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: C. Hubert Parry: 'Elegy'; **Music for Quiet Reflection:** Maria Theresia von Paradis: 'Sicilienne'; **Postlude:** Georg Muffat: Les Gendarmes and Gavotte .

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 household members.

Next Sunday: The service at 11am will be conducted by the minister, **Jack**, and Probationer Minister, **Allan**. It will be the Third Sunday in Advent. We will light the Third candle on the Advent Wreath and display more pieces of the Nativity scene. The theme is: **Advent Joy – To Us a Child is Born**.
The Sunday School will present their Nativity and the congregation are invited to share in our annual Christmas lunch after the service today.

Daily Readings for the week beginning 5 December.

Mon: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 85:9-14; Luke 5:17-26.

Tues: Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13;
Matthew 18:12-14.

Wed: Isaiah 40:25-31; Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10;
Matthew 11:28-30.

Thurs: Isaiah 41:13-20; Psalm 145:1, 9-13;
Matthew 11:11-15.

Fri: Isaiah 48:17-19; Psalm 1:1-4, 6;
Matthew 11:16-19.

Sat*: Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Matthew 17:30-13.

**a reading from the Apocrypha: The Book of Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4, 9-11.*

It can be read online at <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiasticus+48&version=NRSVACE>

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?!

Prayer Diary: Please find included in the intimations the Prayer Diary for December which we encourage you to use as part of your daily devotions. *PS: Jack wishes to record his apologies to Allan who put together the Diary for November and whose work was not publicly acknowledged.*

The Schools are coming! It's that time of year when the staff, pupils and parents of George Watson's College Junior School (P4-P7) and Craiglockhart Primary School assemble at Polwarth for their Christmas services. They will be here on the afternoons of 8 and 12 December for the former and the morning of 22 December for the latter.

Guid Blethers meets on Monday 5 December from 2.00pm - 4.00pm. Maureen and Sheena Bowman will be showing us their lovely manger scenes from different countries. This will lead us into blethering about different traditions. You are most welcome to join us for this very interesting afternoon and to have tea/coffee and cake with us.

The next choir rehearsal will take place in the church on Sunday 11 December, 0930–1030, with a rehearsal for the 'music and movies' night for the last 15 minutes.

Guild Quiz Letters are now on sale for a donation of £1. All proceeds will go to our own church funds. To obtain your copy see Louise or Morag.

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. Just a few Christmas card sale packs left to buy. It is still not too late to order from the catalogues – see Dawn. Thank you for your support in 2016. Global Concerns

Fire Training TODAY: The Property Team has arranged fire training **TODAY** after the service 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. 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.

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

Burns Supper on Friday 20 January at 6.30pm 2017 in the Drennan Hall.

Please put this date in your diaries now.

Tickets: £15.00 (BYOB) available from Audrey

Currie or Margaret Anderson. People participating: Audrey Currie chairing, Rev. Jack Holt proposing 'The Immortal Memory', Lance Whitehead organising music and song entertainment, Jenny Nex and Allan Morton singing, with Margaret Anderson doing The Address to a Haggis and extract from Tam o' Shanter. **Toast and Reply to the Lasses: Looking for two people who would like to give this a go!** Please speak with Audrey or Margaret if you would like to do this or if you can suggest someone. - Audrey & Margaret

Poste Restante: Poste Restante this year will be held on Sunday 11th December - 18th December. Donations will go to the Church Flower Fund. No cards will be delivered.

SMALL CHANGE JARS: From December 2016 until November 2017 our Small Change Jars will go to support Edinburgh Direct Aid. Jars can be handed to Audrey Downie or Elaine Hopley. Thank you from the Global Concerns Team.