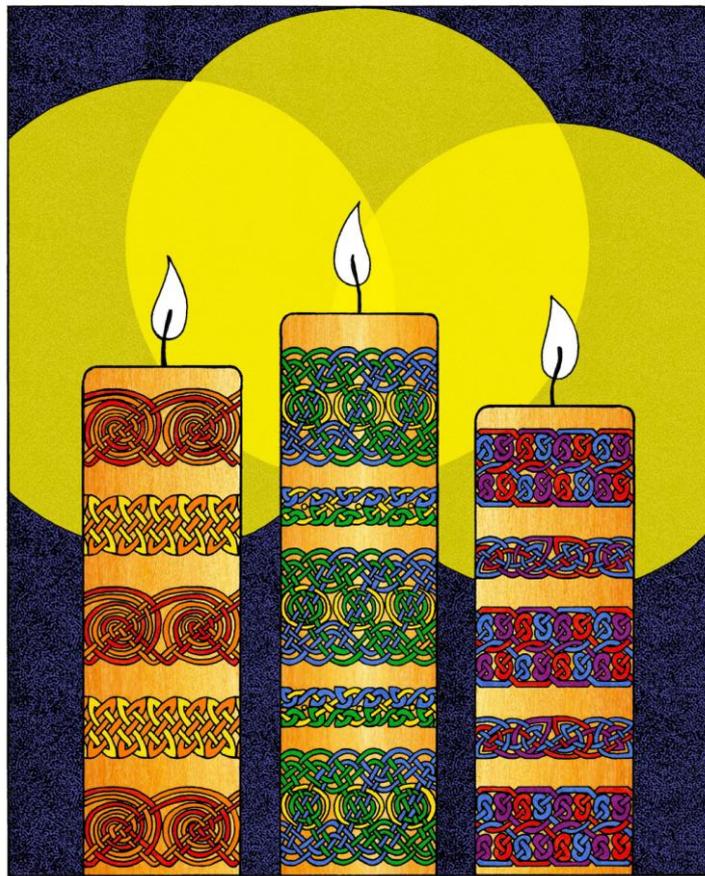


THE BROUGHTON BEACON

Magazine of Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Edinburgh



DECEMBER 2020

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www.bstmchurch.org.uk

www.facebook.com/bstmchurch

Broughton St Mary's Parish Church

12 Bellevue Crescent EH3 6NE



Broughton St Mary's
Parish Church and Community Hub



CHURCH OFFICE: 0131 556 4252

Church website www.bstmchurch.org.uk

You can email us at mail@bstmchurch.org.uk

Find us on facebook www.facebook.com/bstmchurch

Broughton St Mary's Parish Church is a charge of The Church of Scotland in the Presbytery of Edinburgh. The church building was erected in 1824 by the burgh (city) of Edinburgh during the building of the New Town.

It is a distinctive architectural landmark on the city skyline.

And it is home to a faithful and creative worshipping community, while also serving as the parish church for people of all faiths and no faith.

Our facilities are open 7 days a week, offering a welcoming space to a number of community groups, organisations and faith-based initiatives. We welcome enquiries to hire the use of the facilities but regret that we can only accept bookings for activities allowed under current government guidelines. Contact us for further information.

As a welcoming church, Broughton St Mary's offers a supportive space for the full participation of LGBT people in the life of the church.

We are currently in a vacancy situation following the sudden death of our minister, Peter Macdonald, in February. Presbytery has appointed Rev Sam Torrens as Interim Moderator and we are grateful for his support.

The Rev Bill Taylor will be conducting worship throughout December and we look forward to journeying towards Christmas with him.

Our church administrator, Lindsey Rowlands, has been on furlough since the start of lockdown. She is now back working a few hours a week, mainly from home. She can be contacted on admin@bstmchurch.org.uk

You can also contact Broughton St Mary's by email via the Session Clerk, Ian Buckingham, ianbucks@hotmail.co.uk or mail@bstmchurch.org.uk.

For enquiries about the Beacon, contact the Editor, Diane Chisholm, at diane_c@btinternet.com.

For more information about Broughton St Mary's, visit our website www.bstmchurch.org.uk.



30m Exterior



Keep safe and well everyone!

The Broughton Beacon December 2020

Letter from Rev Bill Taylor

“Through the heartfelt mercies of our God,
God’s Sunrise will break in upon us,
Shining on those in the darkness,
those sitting in the shadow of death,
Then showing us the way, one foot at a time,
down the path of peace.”

Luke 1:78-79 (The Message)*

Dear Friends,

This has been a year like no other. The Coronavirus global pandemic has changed all of our lives and taken the lives of many. We are aware of how precarious life can be and many of us feel fragile. It is into such a time as this that we tell of how God came amongst us as a new-born baby, embracing our life with all its vulnerability. How appropriate that early in Advent we hear these words “Comfort my people,” says our God, “comfort them!” (Isaiah 40:1), so beautifully set to music in the opening vocal movement of Handel’s Messiah.

Christmas will be different this year; restrained certainly, quite probably with some restrictions around it. Hopefully there will be some respite when families can be together. Even if we find ourselves saying ‘It’s Christmas, but not as we know it’ we can be sure Christmas hasn’t been cancelled! The ‘heartfelt mercies of God’ are just as sure as the hope we find there. As Zechariah said, ‘God’s sunrise will break in upon us..., showing us the way, one foot at a time down the path of peace.’ If we, like the Christ child in his mother Mary’s arms, can give ourselves permission to be settled in the tender, heartfelt love God has for us, each one, we will find comfort and encouragement there for every day. This love from God is the heart of Christmas, it is God’s gift to us for days such as these, and nothing can take that away.

Nobody knows when Jesus was born. His birth was linked to the Roman festivals of Sol Invicta (the unconquered sun) and Saturnalia (an agricultural festival) on or around the 25th December which celebrated the winter solstice, the lengthening of days. A reasonable time to make a connection with the coming of the Light of the World, but Jesus’ birthday could have been any day of the year, reminding us that the light of God’s love is present every day, God’s heartfelt mercies are new every morning.

There have been occasions when a Service of Healing and Remembering has been held as a way of offering support to people who have been bereaved. Given the sadness our congregation has experienced with our minister Peter’s death and those who have died from COVID-19 and other illnesses, we think there may be considerable interest in such a Service at this time. It will be held on **Wednesday 20th January at 7pm** in the Church and on Zoom. Please do invite friends from the community or anyone in your ken whom you think might be glad of this time. More detailed arrangements for the Service will be available nearer the time.

Thankful for the work of scientists and laboratory technicians, as we look to 2021 there is the prospect of a vaccine. We know it will take time to roll out to all the population and that restrictions will likely continue for some time. Let us pray for the distribution being planned and that those who need the vaccine most will receive it first.

It was into the mix of life that a baby called Jesus was born; still Jesus comes to assure us God is on our side.

Wishing you comfort and peace this Advent and Christmas,
Bill *Rev Bill Taylor*

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Advent and Christmas at Broughton St Mary’s



Sunday 20 December at 10.30am:
All-Age Service in Church and on Zoom

Thursday 24 December at 11.30pm:
Watchnight Service on Zoom

Friday 25 December at 10.30am: Family
Christmas Service on Zoom - show what Santa
brought you!

Sunday 27 December at 10.30am: Worship for
the last Sunday of the year, in Church and on
Zoom. Includes Holy Communion.

All are welcome!

VACANCY

Last month I advised that Presbytery's Vacancy Procedures Committee (VPC) would report to the Presbytery meeting on 3 November that it has agreed Broughton St Mary's should be given permission to call a minister in accordance with the Presbytery Plan. I had hoped to be able to update you with the news that we were now in a position to begin the search for a new minister. Unfortunately, the VPC report was not received at Presbytery on 3 November as expected. This was because the Presbytery Clerk reported that she had received four written requests asking for the committee's proposal to be considered at the next meeting of Presbytery which takes place on 1 December. These requests were granted in accordance with Church Practice and Procedure and the Presbytery Clerk has confirmed that the matter of the vacancy at Broughton St Mary's will be on the agenda on 1 December. A citation from Presbytery intimating this was read in church on 22 and 29 November.

Printing deadlines mean that I am unable to report the outcome of the Presbytery meeting on 1 December in this edition of the Broughton Beacon. I hope to be able to report fully in the January 2021 edition. Those of you on the church's email address list will receive updates by email. *Ian Buckingham*

Christmas Services

Due to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions, the Kirk Session has agreed that services on Christmas Eve (11:30pm) and Christmas Day (10:30am) will not take place in the church building this year. Services on both days will however be held via the Internet on Zoom at the same times. Sunday worship on 27 December will take place at 10:30am in the church and also on Zoom.

For information on how to connect to church services on Zoom, you should follow the instructions on the church website at <https://www.bstmchurch.org.uk/2020/04/home-worship/>

If you do not have internet access you can still join the service on your telephone by following these instructions:

Step 1: Dial 0131 460 1196

Step 2: A recorded voice will ask you to enter the meeting ID on your telephone key pad

Step 3: Enter 112 135 361#

Step 4: A recorded voice will ask you to enter your participant number

Step 5: Enter #. You are now in the meeting/service. There is a dedicated group taking part in church services on Zoom. If you are unable to attend church in person, why not join them every Sunday just before 10:30am. *Ian Buckingham*

ROCK TRUST

Rent Deposit Scheme

This project aims to help young people, aged 16-25, in moving into their own tenancy within Edinburgh and the Lothians. We aim to do this by assisting them in overcoming barriers such as upfront costs – be it a deposit, first month's rent or basic furnishings. We can also provide, and refer when necessary, additional levels of support concerning employability, mental health, budgeting and mentoring.

If you have heard of us before, you may know about the services we traditionally provide. However, with a new year of funding comes new parameters of how we can help young people achieve their housing goals. The scheme now provides assistance to young people looking to access either **private or social housing** through various means. We can help with the following:

- Providing landlords with a guarantee certificate in place of cash deposit or first month's rent, allowing the young person to pay in monthly instalments
- Assistance in paying for upfront costs, such as the deposit, first month's rent, or basic furnishings
- One-to-One support finding a suitable property and moving in (we only work with registered landlords)
- Dedicated, personalised support to successfully maintain a tenancy.

We also work with our Duty Service Team to ensure that a young person is ready to move into their own tenancy and that they will be able to thrive. If a young person isn't quite ready, we will happily work with them to reach a point where they are – be it through budgeting advice, work surrounding health and wellbeing or employability.

If you currently work with or know a young person looking to move home who might benefit from our service, please let them know that we are here. Referrals are best made through rentdeposit@rocktrust.org.

*Connor Donaldson, Rent Deposit Scheme
Support Assistant 07716 049949
connor.donaldson@rocktrust.org*

Fund Raising

If anyone would like to purchase marmalade, jam or certain home baking items (eg fruit loaves) please contact Debbie Buckingham on 0131 557 5051. These items can be delivered if you live within a reasonable distance of the church. Many thanks to those who have already purchased jam, marmalade or baking in aid of church funds, and to those who have supplied me with empty jam jars.

We hope to resume our fund raising events once all the current restrictions of movement are over. Please keep safe and well.

Debbie Buckingham

Freewill Offering Envelopes 2021

If you are one of our members who uses FWO envelopes for your weekly donations, there will be a change to how they are distributed this year.

The envelopes for 2021 will soon be available and in view of the circumstances, they will be mailed out instead of being left in the vestibule for collection. The aim is to post them at the end of November, so you should receive them early in December.

Irene Marshall

LIFE AND WORK MAGAZINES

Life and Work are offering a special promotion to anyone switching from purchasing their magazine via their church to placing a personal order to be sent to their chosen address. This offer will be available throughout 2021 and is payable by direct debit only. **12 Month Subscription only £30, (usual price £36, so 2 free issues).**

Savings can also be made by subscribing to a digital edition of Life and Work at www.lifeandwork.org.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer, please contact **Diane Chisholm** for details (0131 657 2447). From January 2021 Broughton St Mary's will no longer be posting Life and Work to subscribers, and individual copies will not be available to pick up at the door of the church.

Our own church magazine, **The Broughton Beacon**, can now be accessed online via email and on our website, www.bstmchurch.org.uk

We will continue to send the Beacon by post to those not able to receive it online, and copies are also available at the church.

MESSY CHURCH

We are still unable to get together for Messy Church.

We hope to be up and running again before too

long, and we will keep you updated with any progress. For more information contact Jan Allan

messychurch@bstmchurch.org.uk



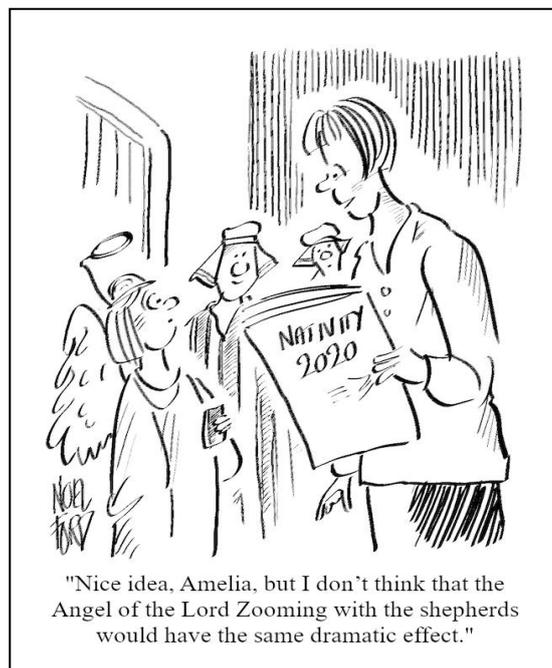
Pastoral Care

These are tough times for people, and lonely times. We all keep well through inclusion, confirmation and having an element of control. Covid 19 has had an effect on everything that maintains wellbeing.

Some handy tips for keeping well from the Pastoral Care Team:

Connect with people - if you can't do face to face, write a letter, join Zoom Church or lift the phone to an old friend. Be active - even if it's exercises in your chair or a daily walk. Mental activity is also essential so try a wordsearch or puzzle, or sing old hymns to yourself and surprise yourself how the words come back to you. Take notice - a seat at the window, watch the news, read the newspaper, follow the seasons and the great work of nature. Keep learning - about yourself, about people, about society or just try and add a new recipe to your collection. Give - there is clear evidence that giving is part of feeling good. A kind thought, a wee gift to someone,

Please contact Colin Beck on 0131 556 4516 if you need assistance from a member of the team.



DECEMBER CALENDAR

The calendar has been suspended for the time being due to the ongoing situation with the coronavirus.

Winter Solstice - 21 December



A Midwinter festival has been a part of life since pre-Christian times. When the hours of daylight are fewest, the warmth of the sun weakest, and life itself seemingly at a standstill, our ancestors, the pagan peoples of Europe and Western Asia, kept festival by lighting bonfires and decorating their buildings with evergreens. Perhaps they believed that the dying sun could be enheartened by fire, and the life of the buried seed assured by the presence of evergreen branches.

With the advent of Christianity, the Spring gods became identified with Christ, and the birthday of the sun with the birthday of the Light of the World. Many Anglo-Saxon customs were never discarded, but simply endowed with a new significance. By 1598 one John Stow of London wrote: "Against the feast of Christmas, every man's house, as also their parish churches, were decked with holme, ivie, bayes, and whatsoever the season of the yeare afforded to be greene."

In the depths of a dark and cold Scottish winter, perhaps it is no surprise that many of us feel the need to brighten our homes with fairy lights and candles, to hang holly wreaths on our doors and to adorn a fir tree with sparkly decorations. -Ed.

Part of a letter from Rev John McCulloch

...How do we, as a church, see our surrounding world? And how does the surrounding world see us? During this time of global pandemic, when many church buildings remain closed, there is an opportunity for the church, wherever it finds itself, to become deeply missional by focusing on what lies outside of its walls.... the central message of Christianity is that we worship a God who has entered into human suffering. A God who knows what it is to be acquainted with grief. A God who enters our broken world, to heal it from within. May we have the eyes to see our world and each other as God sees us. And may this transform our mission in the world, which is the purpose for which the church exists, to be God's healing hands and feet, in such a world as ours.

Rev John McCulloch, Mission Partner in Israel & Palestine

The Bells, the Bells...

On a Sunday morning, a few weeks ago, a local resident told us how much she and her neighbours appreciated hearing our church bell ring again. Our bell is probably heard by hundreds of people, in their homes and out and about, going about their daily lives. The sound of our bell is a sign that we are back, that people are once again active in the church building, that perhaps 'normal life' can

resume in some small way. Who knows what effect our presence here in Bellevue Crescent has for those who live and work in our parish?

Diane Chisholm

I heard the Bells on Christmas Day



I heard the bells on Christmas day

Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat,

Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come,

The belfries of all Christendom

Had rolled along th'unbroken song

Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head:

'There is no peace on earth, ' I said, 'For hate is strong, and mocks the song

Of peace on earth, good will to men.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:

'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;

The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,

With peace on earth, good will to men.'

Till, ringing, singing on its way,

The world revolved from night to day

A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,

Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



The Flower Rota has been suspended for the time being due to the ongoing coronavirus situation.



HELEN O'GRADY DRAMA ACADEMY

Classes are held at Broughton St Mary's Church, Bellevue Crescent, on a Friday from 1.50 - 2.50pm and a Saturday morning from 10 - 11am for Primary School children.

Our classes are great fun and are designed to give students confidence, self esteem and skills that will help them in all aspect of life.

Get in touch to book a free trial lesson.

midscot@helenogrady.co.uk
www.helenogrady.co.uk
07701 333476

CrossReach Christmas Card and Calendar Collection

A wide range of cards, 2021 calendars, gift wrap and other gifts.

All profits go to support the work of CrossReach, the social care provider of the Church of Scotland, which provides services to the elderly, people with mental health and addiction problems, and vulnerable families and children across the country.

See the full collection and order yours at www.shop.crossreach.org.uk or 0131 454 4374.



The Editor would like to wish all Beacon Readers a very Happy Christmas!

The Last Laugh

❖ One day near Christmas a young boy suddenly said to his mother, 'Mum, I know something about Father Christmas, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy.'

Taking a deep breath, she asked him what that might be. 'Easy,' he said, 'They are all nocturnal'.

❖ The grandson had just taken a photograph of his grandmother who had come to stay for Christmas and her 89th birthday. 'Granny, I really hope I'm around next year to photograph you on your 90th birthday,' he said tactfully.

'Why not?' his grandmother shrugged. 'You look healthy enough to me.'

❖ This Christmas, if your family gets together, remember: a certain friction between the generations is inevitable. After all, the young and the old have all the answers and those in between are stuck with all the questions.

❖ Two daughters had been given parts in a Christmas pageant at their Church. At dinner that night they got into an argument as to who had the most important role. Finally, the 14 year-old said to her 8 year-old sister, 'Well, you just ask Mum. She'll tell you it's much harder to be a virgin than it is to be an angel.'

Children's Christmas Carols

We three kings of porridge and tar.
On the first day of Christmas my tulip gave to me
Olive, the other reindeer.
Sleep in heavenly peas.

Q: Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?
A: A mince spy.

