

Peterculter Parish Church Newsletter

FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends

The Christmas story is a reminder of the precarious nature of life. The risky journey to Bethlehem, the birth in primitive circumstances, the dangers from Herod and the flight to Egypt. At any point, something could have gone wrong and the Christ child might have died or have not been born at all. What if instead of returning by a different route, the Wise Men had gone back to Herod and told him where to find the Christ child? Herod would have sent his soldiers to the stable and Christ would have been killed as a baby. God took an amazing risk by sending his Son into an unpredictable and dangerous world.

We have been reminded over this past year of just how precarious life is today and how vulnerable we are as human beings. The Coronavirus has demonstrated that fact all too clearly.

This will be a Christmas like no other. When we celebrated it last year with our church being full at the Family Service with the Nativity Play and at the Candlelit Service, none of us could have imagined that next Christmas Nativity Plays would be out, no carols could be sung and the church would be limited to 50 people attending, all wearing masks. We never imagined that anything could take away all that. Nor did we imagine that something would happen which meant we couldn't hug, shake hands, sit close together and sing in praise to God.

Life is indeed fragile. And into a fragile world God sent a tiny child, born into a world of unpredictability, instability and uncertainty. In so doing, God is telling us that nothing, not even death, can separate us from His love.

Christmas celebrations will be different, but we will still celebrate. Amidst the horrors of a global pandemic, we need to hear the Christmas message all the more. The message is a simple one, but it is breath-taking in its significance and power. It says that even in the darkest moments God is with us.

I hope that, despite the restrictions, you are able to enjoy Christmas and still be able to celebrate its true meaning.

Happy Christmas to you all.

Yours sincerely

John Ferguson

CHRISTMAS 2020

All are welcome to come along to our annual **Time to Remember Service** on Sunday December 13th at 2.00 pm. You will need to book a place for this service and can do so in the usual way by phoning or emailing the church office. This is an opportunity for all those who have lost loved ones to seek comfort through faith in our risen saviour at such a difficult time.

This year we will **not be having a Watchnight Service or Christmas Day Service**. However, there will be a live streamed Watchnight Service from Culter Parish Church at 11.30 pm. The Aberdeen West Churches service on December 20th will include a Nativity Play at which the children from our local churches take part.

There will be a Candlelit Service on Christmas Eve at 7.00 pm. This service is limited to 50 people and booking in advance is essential. If necessary, we will arrange for the service to be streamed through to the Large Hall.

There will be no service at church on December 27th, but you can of course tune in to the Aberdeen West service on YouTube.

Every day in Advent the Aberdeen West Ministers are offering a short Advent Reflection on the Aberdeen West Churches Facebook page.

A **Reverse Advent Calendar** is available at the church door. Just pick up the calendar and add an item of food every day in Advent in aid of Instant Neighbour. You then take your bag along to the Candlelit Service on December 24th at 7.00 pm or the Instant Neighbour drop off on Monday January 11th, 11.00 am - 12noon.



LIFE AND WORK

Life and Work magazine is available every month and during lockdown, our Life and Work Organiser, Shona Stewart, has been kindly delivering the magazine to subscribers. Shona is happy to continue to do that, as many of you will not be at church to pick it up. If you wish to subscribe to it, the cost is just £2.80 a month and you should phone Shona on 01224 739369.

NOT THE CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The Gift Day held on Saturday November 28th raised the sum of £6000. It does not include Gift Aid and those who gave by bank transfer and so this total will increase.

This is a truly fantastic total, given the present very difficult circumstances. It is a sign that Peterculter Church members care deeply about the work of the church and the advancement of the Kingdom of God and have rallied round in a magnificent way during this time of crisis.

A huge thank you to all of you for your generosity. Don't forget, a simple way to give to the church is by bank transfer via the following:

Sort Code 83-49-40

Account No- 00628410

Name – Peterculter Parish Church

COMMUNION

The Communion Service held recently went well and was undertaken in such a way that all social distancing measures were adhered to. A big thank you to the team who organised this. The next Communion will take place within the service, using the same method, on January 31st 2021.

INSTANT NEIGHBOUR

Drop off times for Instant Neighbour are on Mondays from 11 am - 12noon and 7.00pm - 7.30 pm



KIDNEY CARE UK

Please remember that used postage stamps are gratefully received by Miss Dayer Colburn who sends them off to the charity Kidney Care UK. If you can help, please pop them through Dayer's door at 163B North Deeside Road or through the church office letterbox.

CHURCH OFFICE

Please note that the church office remains closed to church members and the public. Although the church secretary may be there for short periods to undertake essential photocopying etc, please do not enter the office.

CHURCH DIRECTORY: FUNERALS

4th December: Lynn Milne, Deeside Care Home

BIBLE STUDY DATES 2021

The Bible Study group will meet by Zoom on 14th Jan, 28th Jan, 11th Feb, 25th Feb, 11th March and 25th March at 7pm.

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