

Prestongrange Church Dec. 2019

Dear friends,

It's easy to dismiss Christmas by saying that it is "a kiddies time"; feeling that we have outgrown it and allowing the wonder of it all to pass us by. If we simply make it all about Santa and elves and presents and parties and allow the pressure and commercialism of it all to dominate, then we can easily be deflated by it and dismiss it as "humbug" by a certain age. Instead of being caught up with the Christ at the centre of our celebrations, its easy to be side-tracked by the tinsel and trappings even by the stuff that is good in itself at this "time of giving" and miss out on God's greatest gift of all– the giving of His Son to be our Saviour and our friend.



I write these thoughts this side of the General Election when whatever happens and whatever consequences arise as a result of our vote, we would hope for better days ahead in spite of all the fears and uncertainties we face at this crucial time of our nation's history. Perhaps we feel that we are groping in the dark as we seek to know where truth lies and who can be trusted. Wouldn't it be great if we could trust someone to fully and finally sort things for us and make things better? The good news is that one has come into our history to sort us out and secure our destiny with the best possible of outcomes.

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." So says Isaiah (9.2) as he prophetically speaks about the promised coming of Jesus into our dark and dismal world. And more than this, he comes to lives that have been darkened and overshadowed by our own wrongdoing to expose and expel the reign of sin in our lives and where he is welcomed, to bring us into a friendship with God. The one who was born to die on the cross as God's greatest gift that we could ever have and enjoy, comes to light up our lives by his presence. As we sing in the carol, "Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings." In Mary's song of rejoicing, we read, "The Mighty One has done great things for me– holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation." (Luke 1.49 & 50).

The sad and terrible thing is that we have ruled Christ out of Christmas and even more tragically, out of our lives. Is that not the reason for the desperate state of affairs in our nation? We have no room for God or for the word of God and therefore do not know the peace of God. We are rebels against his authority and rule believing that we know best and don't need our Maker to interfere or tell us what to do. We will not have Him and we would rather live and die without Him– yet hope that all might be well at the end of the day. What tragedy and what nonsense!

The despised and marginalised shepherds who went to see Jesus did the right thing. They saw for themselves and believed the Good News concerning Jesus and "returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told." (Luke 2.20). Those who know and prove God's love are the most blessed. May we be among them– and rejoice.

Moira joins me in praying that you may have a joy and peace filled Christmas. *Kenneth Donald*

Christmas Eve. Service
Tues. 24th Dec. 6.30pm.



For all the family.

Christmas Day: 10.30 am.
(45 mins. of celebration)



as we
give
thanks to
God for
Jesus.
Free to be
with us?

Refreshments served.



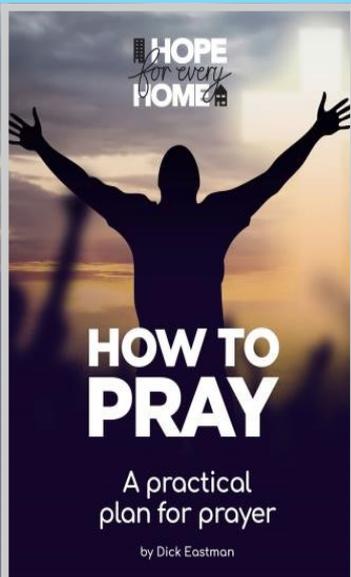
Sun. 5th. January
11a.m.
Churches
Together for a joint

service- Salvation Army Hall.

Not to be missed!

Musicians & vocalists

How about offering your vocal
or musical abilities to be part of
our praise band over
December? Have a word with
David, or John.



12 aspects of practical prayer and 7 major spheres of influence to focus on as we pray for our community.

Pick up your free copy today.

Carol services:

Sun. 8th Dec. 4pm

Longniddry Church.

Sun. 15th. Dec. 3pm

Salvation Army Hall.

Mini- musical nativity

Audio Visual & Sound Desk

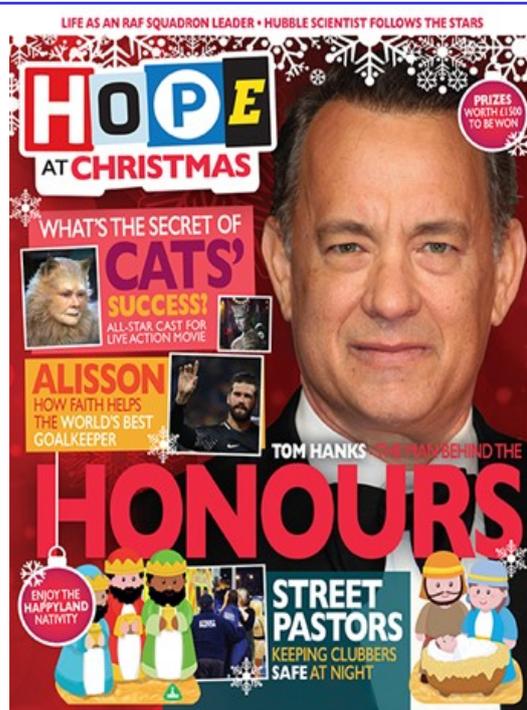
We need extra hands on deck! Like to help with sound? See John Cunningham or Chris Dixon who will train you up!

VALENTINE'S AFTERNOON TEA

Saturday 15th Feb.

2-4 pm. Cost £6.00

Prestongrange Church Hall



The Challenge:

1. Pray for 5 people to give a free copy of the magazine "Hope for Christmas" to. Pick up your magazines at the church on Sunday.
2. Offer to deliver copies to Preston Square. Ask someone else if they can partner you in the work.
3. Deliver a copy to 20 homes in your street (confirm street with us before you deliver them).

Home groups

Small groups for fellowship, bible study and prayer are an integral part of our church. They are a good way of getting to know folks and a good means of growing in faith. Talk to us if you would like to come along to a group in the new year.

HELP WANTED

We now have 7 teams set up to clean the church on a rota basis and would like to see another team of 2-3 people form an 8th. team. If you are able to give an hour to help every other month or when available, please contact Jane.

Contacts:

Minister - Kenneth Donald

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Treasurer:

margaretmilne@ymail.com

Session Clerk: Jane Hepburn

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<http://www.prestongrange-church.org.uk/>

Facebook: [Prestongrange](#)

A word from our treasurer: As we approach Christmas, we often take time to think of others. As a church we are generous to the foodbank serving others in our community. Many people also like to give to a charity at this time of giving and receiving. If you consider doing this, please include the church in your thoughts. As a church community you have been very generous in helping fund the roof project over recent years. The cost of day to day running of the church continues to grow. Please include Prestongrange in your giving this Christmas. Margaret Milne (Treasurer).

Church bank details: Sort code: 83-26-20 Account no: 00235175

Repairs ongoing. The West gable end of the church (below the tower) is in need of stonework repair. We have recently spent almost £10,000 on work and to complete the job, it may require another £45,000 to be spent. We are hoping to apply for grant assistance in the very near future. If you would like to help us out with the administration of applying for grants (good experience!) please have a word with Jane.