

Prestongrange Church Dec. 2018

Dear friends,

Perhaps you've been looking for that unique gift for a loved one as you've been doing your Christmas shopping. If you are giving gifts, it is always nice to give and receive something that is special. However, unless your gift is a "one-off" then I guess its never truly unique.



However, when we consider the real meaning of Christmas, we recognise that it is all about God giving himself in a unique and special way through the giving of His one and only Son to be our Saviour. Indeed God's love gift to us is none other than Himself coming among us; entering into our broken humanity and darkened world to be alongside us and to be our reconciler. As the gospel writer Matthew tells us, "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means 'God with us') and as Joseph is informed, "You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (ch.1. v. 21 & 22).

Some of the Christmas carols that we will sing as we approach Christmas are timeless and priceless. "Love came down at Christmas" and the lines from another popular carol which say: "Lo! within a manger lies, he who built the starry skies." remind us that the babe of Bethlehem is none other than the man of love that created the universe and who rules over it- and who will hold us to account: "all things have been created through him (Jesus) and for him." (Colossians 1.16). The Creator & designer of the universe comes to be with us in all our brokenness and need- a more amazing love we will not find; a love that is poured out through the cross as he who was born to die for us, now lives to bring us the gift of salvation.

Like all gifts, Christ was given to be received. And yet sadly and perversely, he will be ignored and rejected by many in favour of a materialistic and secular alternative. "He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him." (John 1.10). How shameful and perverse is that? And yet- spiritual blindness disables us from seeing what no eye can see until our eyes are opened to our own poverty of spirit and the riches that are in Christ; "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." (v.'s 12 &13). As the carol puts it:
O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today." Have you received God's greatest of Jesus? What better gift could we ever receive?

Thank God for Jesus. May your Christmas and new year be richly blessed. Moira joins me in sending our warm greetings,

Kenneth Donald

Christingle Service

Mon. 24th Dec. 6.30pm.

For all the family.

Children make their own Christingle.



Christmas eve. Late night Service 11.30p.m. Finishing after midnight.

Christmas Day: 10 a.m. (45 mins. of celebration) as we give thanks to God for Jesus. Free to be with us?

Sun. 6th. 11a.m. Together service- Army Hall.



January Churches for a joint Salvation

FABRIC CONVENER

URGENTLY REQUIRED: Help to co-ordinate work required on our buildings. See Jane.

DISPLAY AREA

A display area is being set up in the church and will be used for displaying historical artefacts, old pictures of the church and surrounding areas. We may have themed displays of Old Industries of Prestonpans, Sunday School through the ages and Family events etc.

If you have any items you are willing to loan or give to the church, please contact Jane Hepburn, 01875 610758. hpbrnfmly@aol.com

CHURCH ROOF

Following the completion of the roof work, we will have to vacate the church building and use the church hall for a while to allow interior painting to commence. (see overleaf). This will hopefully engender closer fellowship.

Small world Fairtrade Shop

Thank you to all who have supported us over the past year at the shop, church sales and coffee mornings. We will close for a Christmas break at 12 noon on Friday 21st December and reopen on Tuesday 15th Jan. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all at Small World.

Funerals:

Margaret Harvey

Margaret Watters

Margaret Robertson

Cathy Roberson

Bill Clark

Retiral- Thanks to Fiona who has compiled Pans Post over the years. Also to Sheila & Diane for collating the newsletter. New volunteers sought!

HELP WANTED

A small group are meeting to clean the church hall, mainly Thursday or Friday mornings but times are flexible depending on when the hall is used by the different groups. If you are able to give an hour to help, please contact Jane Hepburn (01875 610758) and a rota of teams of 3 or more can then be made.

VALENTINE'S AFTERNOON TEA

Sat. 16th Feb. Church Hall. 2-4p.m. Cost : £5.00 This is a ticket only event For tickets see Margaret Rankin, Yvonne Baillie or Jane Hepburn.

Redecoration & refurbishment of church

Any donations towards the interior paintwork (around £6,000) would be welcomed. See Margaret Milne, treasurer.

We would also hope to buy tables, chairs and sofas as well as a plumbed in serving counter to develop a dedicated café area in the church – as donations allow.....Stop press...We have been kindly pledged £5,000.

Contacts:

Minister - Kenneth Donald Ph: 01875 813643

kwdonald@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer: margaretmilne@ymail.com

Session Clerk: Jane Hepburn Ph: 610758

hpbrnfmly@aol.com

Thursday Teas in the hall



No afternoon teas in December. Next date is Thursday 31st Jan. 2019

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the "Tea Team".

90 kg. Challenge

This Kilombero Fairtrade rice costs £3.30 a kilo. 90 kilos bought enables a Malawi farmer to send his child to secondary schools- unusual in a poor country like Malawi. Could Prestongrange Church accept this challenge?

If enough people signed up to this, the Small World Shop would order 90k and together we could help at least one child access education.



Audio Visual & Sound Desk

We need extra hands on deck! See John Cunningham or Chris Dixon who will train you up! We hope to install a new projector & screen early next year. Funds are in place.

Our prayer secretary, Margo Cunningham writes:

Heavenly Father we give thanks for our government. We pray for all men and women having authority over us in any way. Pour out your Spirit upon them and make Your Word known to them. Cause them to be men and women of integrity, obedient concerning us, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Let wisdom enter their hearts, and let knowledge be pleasant to them. Let discretion preserve them and understanding keep them, to deliver them from the way of evil and from evil men.

Make their hearts and ears attentive to Godly counsel, doing what is right in your sight. Let the upright dwell in our government. Cause there to be a shaking in all areas. Let those complete and blameless before you stay and cut off the wicked. Let the unfaithful be rooted out. Bring to light what is hidden in darkness and expose the secret aims of their hearts.

Let this nation remember from where they have fallen, repenting, and returning to doing our first works, setting our hearts and souls to seek the Lord, humbling ourselves, praying, and turning from our wicked ways. Then hear us, O Lord, and forgive our sins and heal our land.

Open our eyes and turn us from darkness to light. Soften the hearts that are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Deliver them from their destructions.

Father, you have been long-suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Raise up a standard in this nation. Cause the rains of Your Spirit to flood this land and revive Your work in the midst of us.

Raise up intercessors for this nation to pull down strongholds over this land and let the glory of the Lord be revealed! Amen