SCOTTISH CHARITY SC 012888 WINTER 2017 EDITION

Holytown Parish Church

260 Edinburgh Road, Holytown, ML1 5RU: 01698 832622



Christmas' True Meaning by Deborah Ann Belka

Let Christmas' true meaning, rise up in you today...
may you see the real splendour of Jesus' birth on this day.
May His beauty and grandeur, cause your heart to sing,
may the gift of His excellence become your eternal spring.
May his majesty you behold, with all dignity and honour,
may the fullness of His truth glorify His heavenly father.
May the wonder of His grace, reveal its magnificence in you,
may the gratefulness you feel be in all you say and do.
Let Christmas' true meaning, bring your Saviour near today,
may you see the need for Him today... and every day.

A very Merry Christmas,

Lucy



Present Aid

Give meaningful gifts this Christmas to those who need them most.



1 Corinthians 13 A Christmas Version

Make sure love is at the heart of your Christmas.



Children's Christmas Corner

A little space for the little members of the congregation!

A Note from the Minister...

Well Remembrance has come and gone and so the season of Advent is almost upon us once more - that wonderful season of waiting as we prepare ourselves to welcome anew the light of the world - Jesus our Saviour - born as a baby in Bethlehem.

How good are you at waiting?

It seems to me that for many people waiting is a thing of the past and impatience is definitely on the rise.

You only have to see how frustrated people get at roundabouts when you are out driving, no one has the patience to wait a moment longer than they think they should and so no one will give way they just pull out in front of you - highway code or not!

When standing in checkout queues or in a queue at the bank or Post Office all you seem to hear these days is grumbles and sighs and groans because the queue is not moving fast enough for folk - they certainly don't wait to engage in conversation unless it is to moan about the time the queue is taking!

Waiting though is essential!

Life is just so full of waiting and if we have no patience and live our lives in a constant state of impatience then frustration will abound in our lives.

In some ways I think many people in the church are impatient too at this time of year - it is as if they can't wait to get to Christmas and so as a result they become impatient with the Advent season. I don't know how many people over the years have said to me 'can we not get on to the Christmas hymns they are so much nicer than the Advent ones'!

Well no we can't, we have to be patient!

We have to wait because if we don't wait and wonder then how can we ever be prepared to welcome the precious gift that is God's son.

In fact, sometimes I think Advent is not long enough for us to get prepared and to even begin to appreciate the gift we are being given by God at Christmas!

Although I am sure if Advent was longer we still might not be prepared for Christmas and the gift we are being given, for we would just fill up the extra time and probably not with the right kind of preparations either!



Maybe we can never be prepared enough and does it matter if we are not?

There is a kind of feeling in clergy circles that we ministers sometimes voice at this time of year when folk ask us why we get to Christmas Day and then look either a wee bit miserable or even so worn out that we slump over our Christmas dinner - even while realising how fortunate we are to have a Christmas dinner - many would jokingly say we are so worn out with all the Advent preparations - so busy making Christmas happen for others that when we actually get to the 25th December - we are exhausted!

However, we would also say, we have to prepare folk for this amazing gift because God comes to us - God is with us - Immanuel - and he comes whether we are fully prepared or completely frazzled, fully rested or a little bit exhausted - he comes - surprising us anew - ready or not!

There are so many ways to prepare ourselves for his coming - and the great Advent themes help us to do just that - those wonderful themes of hope, peace, joy and love which we share and enjoy and hopefully absorb as we travel through Advent and prepare ourselves once more for Christmas.

The wonderful news is that God will come - ready or not!

So let's take time this Advent to prepare - let's not be impatient - let's not rush towards Christmas too quickly - let's listen again to the prophets foretelling the good news, let's listen again to the familiar story - let's sing those Advent hymns and patiently wait for God to come in human form - Immanuel!

Blessings Caryl

You are invited to share in Communion on Sunday 3rd December 2017,
Holytown Parish Church at 10am.



What's On With December being such a busy month for many, please take a look at the various services being held. You are most welcome to join in worship, reflection and celebration! Advent 1 3rd December Communion, 10am Blue Christmas, 3pm (Holytown) Carols and Pies, 6:30pm (Holytown) Advent 2 10th December Gift Service, 10am Advent 3 17th December Nativity Service, 10am Advent 4 24th December Nine Lessons and Carols, 10am Crib Service, 7pm (Wrangholm) Watchnight Service, 11pm (Holytown) Christmas 25th December Christmas Day, 10am (Holytown) Christmas 1 31st December Worship, 10am A Hogmanay Party will be held on 31st December in the Holytown Church Hall, from 9pm - 12:30am! All are welcome to see in the new year!

Blue Christmas

Our Blue Christmas Service takes place this year in Holytown Church on the 3rd December at 3pm. This is a special service of remembrance and is open to anyone who has lost a loved one at any time and who would like to take some quiet reflective time away from all the busyness of Christmas to remember their loved one in a special way. Do come along, if you wish, and share in this time of remembering which many find helpful at this difficult time of year.

The Guild

Christine Duns, President

The Guild wish to say a big hello to the ladies who have not managed back this session, whether it be through illness, or other reasons. We miss you and you are in our prayers.

To celebrate Guild week we will be helping taking part in the church service on Sunday 19th November.

This year 5 of our ladies celebrate 40 years in the Guild;

Isa Hinshelwood

Nan Maglone

Lizzie Hodge

Betty Jenkins

Cathie Davidson



By the time this magazine is published we will have celebrated this momentous event in Guild Week. The ladies received a scarf, badge and certificate. After the service on Sunday 19th November, a tea will be served for the ladies and members of the congregation.

We still extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to come along to our Wednesday evenings at 7.15 pm in the Michael Sherry Centre in Holytown. Please think about it and come along.

We would also like to invite you to join with us in celebrating St. Andrews Night on Wednesday 29th November 2017. We have a great night of music, song and dance organised. Stewart McNeil will be playing for us and also there will be a cup of tea, piece of dumpling, shortbread and tablet to accompany. All are welcome and we look forward to seeing you there!

OVER TO YOU!

What would you like to see in this newsletter? Do you have something to share with the congregation that you would like to include in the next edition? Please speak to me if you have any queries - after all, this is your newsletter.

1st Holytown Boys' Brigade

Kenny Bell & Glen Baillie

Four boys from the Junior Section recently took part in the Battalion General Knowledge competition and gained a respectable fourth place out of nine teams who took part.

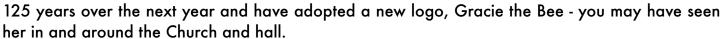
The boys are; Spencer Craig, Isaac Gardner, Lucas MacKenzie and Findlay Leggat.

Well done boys!



Linda Baillie

The girls and officers have had a busy time since starting back in August. Girls' Brigade Scotland will be celebrating



Last year, the Explorers and Rosebuds adopted a Guide Dog called Fifi. We have just had great news that Fifi is now fully trained and has been placed with her new owner, John.

All sections will be having their Christmas craft evening on Wednesday 29th November 2017 and the girls can dress in something Christmassy. Our joint Christmas party with the Boys' Brigade is all booked for Saturday 2nd December 2017 from 3pm til 5pm. The younger sections of the brigades will enjoy an exciting afternoon with a party entertainer. If we are really lucky, a certain white-bearded gentleman with a red coat might just come and join us....

You can find us on Facebook - search Holytown GB.



Saying a Prayer for His Christmas Meal...

Lee, a seven year old boy, was asked to say thanks for the Christmas dinner. The family members bowed their heads in expectation. Lee began his prayer, thanking God for his Mummy, Daddy, brothers, sister, Grandma, and all his aunts and uncles. Then he began to thank God for the food. He gave thanks for the turkey, the stuffing, the Christmas pudding, even the cranberry sauce. Then Lee paused, and everyone waited... and waited. After a long silence, the young fellow looked up at his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the brussel sprouts, won't he know that I'm lying?"



Thank You!

(If you have a message of thanks you would like to share with the congregation, please let me know and I can include it in a future edition).

- * "I should like to thank everyone for their concern when I was in hospital and in the spell immediately after coming home. I did appreciate the visits I received. I should like to thank Caryl, our minister, for her visits both in hospital and at home. They were most welcome. A big "thank you" to everyone who sent me a card. The hospital folk were teasing me about having a fan club. I am happy to say that i now feel more or less back to normal although the hospital is still keeping tabs on me." Margaret Milne.
- * Thank you to all those who have donated flowers to the Church throughout the year to brighten up our Sunday worship. The people who receive the flowers afterwards are always most grateful to be thought of in this special way.
- * I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the newsletter over the past year, no matter how great or small. I couldn't do this without all your contributions and together, I hope we are building an interesting and informative read!

Sunday Readers

Jan 7th	Jim Smith
Jan 14th	Glen Baillie
Jan 21st	Graham Kyle
Jan 28th	David Paterson
Feb 4th	Paula Spiers
Feb 11th	Ian Houston
Feb 18th	Kirsty Shaw
Feb 25th	Margaret Milne
March 4th	David Shaw
March 11th	Christine Bell
March 18th	Glen Baillie
March 25th	Betty Reid
April 1st	Graham Kyle
April 8th	David Paterson
April 15th	Jim Smith
April 22nd	Kirsty Shaw
April 29th	Christine Bell

Evening Celebration

Once a month for ten months of the year we have a short, informal service of worship in the hall at 6:30pm, usually on the first Sunday of the month. The service is followed by fellowship which is aided by a cup of tea and a biscuit. There is a core attendance who turn up to all these services but we would love to welcome some new faces to join us. Ten hours a year isn't a huge commitment and you are sure to enjoy it.

If getting to the church hall in the evening is a problem, please let Caryl or any of the elders know and transport can be arranged for you.

Social Committee / Friends of Holytown

May McNeil

You will see from our funds that we have been making some progress on our fundraising and we thank you for your support. We are continuing our efforts with the Smartie tubes - please feel free to uplift your Smartie tube(s) from the vestibule of the Church and return it when you can.

The total amount raised to date (12th November 2017) is £3,230. £90 was raised in September, £100 in October and £40 so far in November.

Christmas Dinner

It's not too late to secure your place at our annual Christmas Dinner which will take place in the Church Hall on Friday 8th December 2017 at 7pm. Tickets are priced at £18.



Fireworks Display

We are sorry that we were unable to hold our intended fireworks display this year. Unfortunately health and safety has to be paramount and there were a few factors which were against this taking place this year. A number of us did go to view the firework display at the West Church in Bellshill and it is our intention to run a similar event in the grounds of Holytown church hall next year.

Shine Music Theatre

A trip has been arranged to see Shine Youth Music Theatre's all new, high energy production of Sister Act in Motherwell Concert Hall on Thursday 11th January. Please speak to a member of the social committee if you are interested in attending.

Present Aid

Are you still looking for a gift for your friends, family or loved ones? Then look no further and visit the Present Aid website www.PresentAid.org.

Present Aid is a charity gift website which supports the work of Christian Aid. It allows you to purchase ethical gifts for those in the greatest need, such as fruit trees, a nanny goat or even access to a clean toilet. In doing so, you are helping to fund Christian Aid's vital work to end poverty around the world - now that's a gift worth giving!

Plus for every pound you give, the UK Government will give a pound more - doubling the support for people living in poverty.

1 Corinthians 13 - A Christmas Version

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love, I am just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love, I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.

Christmas Stamps

When you are buying your stamps this Christmas it is worth considering using religious stamps. Each Christmas the Royal Mail issues religious stamps (in addition to Christmas stamps) but these are not offered routinely at Post Offices. In order to keep the religious significance of Christmas at the fore front, please ask for religious stamps.



Give a Toy, Spread the Joy!

This year, Basics Food Bank are supporting the 'Give a Toy, Spread the Joy' toy appeal throughout North Lanarkshire. With your help, they aim to, "make this Christmas a happy one for all the weans out there without exception". The reality for some families is even one Christmas present is a luxury that they just cannot afford.



The 'Give a Toy, Spread the Joy' appeal is looking for new gifts or good quality toys in nearly-new condition, which are suitable for ages 0-18. Gifts can range from board games, soft toys, themed toys, arts and crafts or video games. Unfortunately, for safety reasons, they are unable to accept electrical or battery goods, or fidget spinners. Gifts should be unwrapped.

To help spread the joy this Christmas, just pop in to one of the local drop off points:

CentrePoint, Gowkthrapple, Wishaw

- * Monday 27th November until Thursday 30th November (any time), or,
- * Saturday 2nd December, 3pm-7pm

Forgewood Community Centre, Motherwell

- * Monday 4th December until Thursday 7th December (any time), or,
- * Saturday 9th December, 3pm-7pm

Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre, Bellshill

* Monday 11st December until Wednesday 13th December, 10am-4pm

Alternative drop off points can be found by visiting northlanarkshire.gov.uk/toyappeal.

Basics Food Bank

In addition to supporting the Toy Appeal, Basics Food Bank continues to offer support to those most at need in the community. From any of their distribution outlets, they are equipped to reach out to those in Crisis with the provision of a food parcel, toiletry items and a gift of Christian literature.

The items which the food bank are currently most in need of are; UHT long life milk, tinned meat, tinned potatoes, tinned custard, long grain rice and small jars of coffee.

Memory

Anonymous

I'm at the age now where I can remember fairly vividly, things that happened half a century ago but occasionally struggle to remember things that happened half an hour ago e.g. does anyone know what I've done with my keys/specs/diary/dog lead/letter I was to post/message list etc.?

Last weekend we remembered, remembered the fifth of November. (The merit in remembering this escapes me somewhat and I'm sure there's a lot of other things more deserving of remembrance than this particular incident.) Now my wee dog absolutely hates fireworks, he gets distressed and barks constantly when they are going off, even if the bangs are coming from quite a distance. Now that's past, I'm more than happy to forget it, forget it!!!!!!!

I'm writing this on the 11th of November, the day before Remembrance Sunday. I think it's so necessary that a special time is set aside to remind us that war and the associated loss and suffering is something that absolutely needs to be remembered and never forgotten and I hope and pray that this act does not become diluted over time.

I thought about looking up scriptures to see what God says about memory and remembrance and found it to be worth sharing.

Proverbs 10:7 - "We have happy memories of the godly, but the name of a wicked person rots away".

Deuteronomy 25:19 - "Therefore, when the Lord your God has given you rest from all your enemies in the land he is giving you as a special possession, you must destroy the Amalekites and erase their memory from under heaven. Never forget this!"

Psalm 34:16 - "But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil; he will erase their memory from the earth".

These few examples from the old testament clearly instruct us to remember that which is worthy of remembrance and that the memory of those who perpetrate acts of evil against God's people will be erased.

The main new testament reference is as follows and I thought it worthwhile to include the whole chapter because there are vital lessons to be reminded of and if anyone asks why you are a Christian and go to church, this would be a good chapter for them to read to provide reasons and for us also to read as a reminder or indeed, remembrance of what our faith actually involves – not my words but God's words.

2 Peter 3 New Living Translation

The Day of the Lord Is Coming

1 This is my second letter to you, dear friends, and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. 2 I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Saviour commanded through your apostles.

3 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. 4 They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

5 They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. 6 Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. 7 And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed.

8 But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. 9 The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

11 Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, 12 looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. 13 But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness.

14 And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

15 And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him— 16 speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction.

Peter's Final Words

17 You already know these things, dear friends. So be on guard; then you will not be carried away by the errors of these wicked people and lose your own secure footing. 18 Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.





Putting Christ Back Into Christmas

Anonymous

It's once again time for me to have my annual rant about the folks that take Christ out of Christmas. It's now becoming fashionable for major retailers to come up with a high budget special pre-Christmas advert for television and social media. I know of people that actually look forward to the launch of these adverts as if they were some kind of special event. For those I've watched so far I've seen a monster, children waking up to lots of presents, turkey dinners, selection of wines, snow and so on and so on. These corporations are taking Christ out of Christmas as effectively as anyone who refers to 'xmas' instead of 'Christmas'. So this year, remember to take a wee bit longer when writing your cards and get the spelling right.

I was made aware of an alternative type of present that could be given at Christmas that costs us nothing. It simply involves giving someone you are odds with a break. It might be someone that you have fallen out with, a former friend, a relative. Even if the reason for the fall-out was all their fault, give them the gift of forgiveness this Christmas and, who knows, it might just be the gift that keeps on giving and at no cost other than a brief swallowing of pride. At least consider it.

A Christmas Star

A bright Christmas star sits high on a tree,

shining its light for the whole world to see,

reminding us all of a night long ago,

when a star in the sky guided wise men below,

to a small town stable where a gift from above,

was born on that night to bring the world love.

The light from the star shone down on a child,

asleep in the manger, so meek and so mild.

Shepherds and wise men who are to draw near,

then spread the good news that the Saviour is here.

Now the Christmas tree star still leads us today,

to the birth of a miracle that first Christmas Day.

- Tom Krause -

Parish Register

<u>Funerals</u>

2017

August

Robert Underwood Sadie McGhie Angus Hughes

September

Eleanor Pettigrew

October

Wilhemina Ellis John Carswell Christine Durie

November

Marion Campbell

Weddings

2017

August

Fiona Johnstone and Ian Johnstone

October

Gemma France and Barry Peat



Financial Statement

Total General income	£48310.47	£47406.19
Boys Brigade project	130.46	0.00
Harvest – Water Aid	181.40	0.00
Christian Aid	496.01	762.50
Wrangholm linkage	1386.46	1027.28
Gift Aid	7828.65	7201.53
Church Fayre	2833.68	3329.55
Day of Giving	765.00	1055.50
Magazines	130.00	143.00
Donations	3025.10	1321.60
Funerals	980.00	1245.00
Hall lets	3559.50	3127.50
Standing Orders	8615.00	7954.80
Plate	4578.81	4385.21
Freewill offering	13800.40	15852.72
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
General Income		

Fabric Fund	£743.27	£2163.52
Total Income	£49053.74	£49569.71
General Expenditure		
	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Ministries & Mission	27474.30	27643.50
Presbytery dues	741.00	752.00
Insurance	2849.04	3113.44
Minister's expenses	832.80	796.42
Pulpit supply	390.00	260.00
Electricity	1338.00	1412.99
Gas	3407.10	6620.54
Telephone	933.58	565.89
Broadband	543.52	525.60
Council Tax	1337.19	1265.80
Organist/Church officer fees	1340.00	1320.00
Organ Maintenance	156.00	0.00
Garden/Grounds Maintenance	600.00	600.00
Paper/Toner/Copier Maintenance	531.08	255.55
Life & Work Magazines	136.50	120.12
Baptism Certificates	34.16	47.99
Church Bus	0.00	1100.00
Charities	1677.41	823.25
Keys	0.00	30.00
Amazonia	101.50	0.00
Spill the Beans literature	68.00	60.00
Postage	0.00	22.00
Total General expenditure	£44491.18	£47335.09

Fabric Fund Expenditure

Floor covering for Manse	387.13	0.00
Floodlight	126.01	0.00
Toilet lock	48.66	0.00
Fire extinguisher service	112.80	130.56
Fire Alarm/Smoke detector service	641.40	0.00
Insurance repairs	6000.00	0.00
Carbon monoxide detector	0.00	29.99
Gas fire	0.00	104.40
Window/roof repair	0.00	150.00
Roof repair	0.00	125.00
Total Fabric expenditure	£7316.00	£1115.05

<u>Total Expenditure</u> <u>£51807.18</u> <u>£48450.14</u>

Children's Corner

This is the space for the younger members of the congregation (although I suspect a few 'big kids' might enjoy it too)... Kids, let me know what you would like to see in this space!

Christmas Word Search



ETWCRSTOCKING IDAERBREGNI OVTRPYAECEFFU REASLEQIXOCTAPZ EMIRYHAUDPSAJON SEAPOBETHLEHEMI NRULOLDONTFOSPU ARLSLEIGHAASUDO MYNOKLTTOYSISHR WCENEMESIWFETAN OBMKAJLOZYEGVMA NERNOLUHMGOTELM SOGIEOYDNACXONE JOTHUWBKAN REEDNIERQCAEER LOOCHRISTMAST

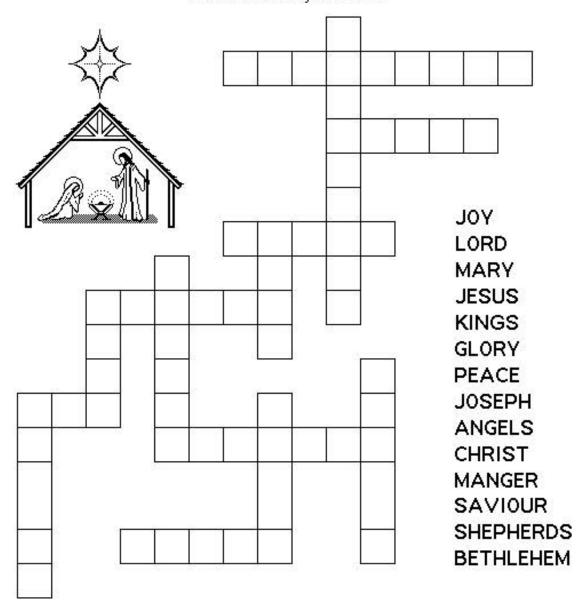
1. Bells	
Bethlehem	
3. Candy	
4. Carol	
5. Christmas	
6. Elves	
7. Gifts	
8. Gingerbread	

9. Holly	17. Sleigh
10. Jesus	18. Snowman
11. Manger	19. Star
12. Merry	20. Stocking
13. Ornament	21. Toys
14. Peace	22. Tree
15. Reindeer	23. Wisemen
16. Santa	24. Yuletide

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Christmas Crossword

Make all the words fit into this crossword. Each word is only used once.



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