



# Broxburn Parish Church

## Bridge Newsletter - Edition 11

### FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR

**Rev. Derek Henderson**



*Dear friends,*

Since I last wrote to you, the Presbytery Plan has been moving forward. After earlier discussions with Strathbrock and Uphall South Churches, the Kirk Session resolved on 30<sup>th</sup> September to support the idea of a three-way union with the other two Churches. When it was considered in early October, the Presbytery Plan said the following:

**Broxburn, Strathbrock and Uphall South** are asked to form a three-way union overseen by 1FTMWS and 0.5 MDS (Community Project). The churches have a history of working together and promoting community involvement. A number of initiatives, such as the BUSY project, should continue to reach into schools. Ecumenical links continue to be encouraged as are other outreach projects, such as SOYA. The congregations are encouraged to use their missional energy and drive to reach out to the new housing in the area (Bangour) and the growing population. A wise use of the buildings is important here, with a mix of the older and the refurbished. Choices will be required in order to find the well-equipped spaces in the right place.

**Buildings:** With these congregations moving towards closer cooperation and Union, decisions regarding buildings are vital. It is proposed, therefore, that St. Machan's, which is used less fully and located less centrally, be designated 'B' and released by 31 December 2025. The other churches provide complementary mission locales and should be designated 'A', although there would be great value in creating a flexible worship and community space at Uphall South that could complement St. Nicholas.

(**Notes:** FTWMS – Full-time Minister of Word and Sacrament. MDS – Mission Development Staff. 'A' = building to be retained. 'B' building to be released).

The designation of our buildings at Broxburn as 'A' means that the Presbytery sees these as being necessary for the future mission of the Church. A number of congregations have responded to the plan, and a revised version will be going to the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian in mid-November, hopefully for final approval. It is not anticipated that this will make any change to the proposals for us.

As I said before, I recognise that these are difficult and uncertain times, but things are moving forward and becoming clearer. Hopefully after November, we will be able to consider how the proposed union might be taken forward. There is a formal process to enable this to happen and will involve all members of the congregation.

May God bless you all,

*Derek*

# Christmas Services



I would like to thank everyone who has provided pulpit supply this year which has ensured our worship has been able to go ahead each week. My thanks also go to the Worship Group who covered Sundays when no one was available, and to Anne Gunn who arranges the cover for us - no easy task!

As both Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Sundays, we have had to review our worship arrangements. As a result, there will be **no** service on Christmas Day in our Church. However, as we move towards working closer with our friends in the Uphall Churches, please see below the arrangements they have in place over Christmas, plus the special service we will have on New Year's Day. You will be made very welcome at all of the following services:

## Christmas Eve

There will be a Watchnight Service in Uphall South Church. The service will begin at **11.30pm** with Carols being sung from **11.15pm**.

## Christmas Day

A Christmas Day Service will take place at Strathbrock St. Nicholas beginning at **10.30am**.

## New Year's Day (Broxburn Parish Church)

We extend a warm New Year welcome not only to our own members and friends but also to those of Strathbrock Church who will be joining us for a combined service at **11am** to start 2023. Rev. Hanneke Janse van Vuren, the minister of Strathbrock St. Nicholas, will lead both congregations in our first worship of the year. We look forward to welcoming friends old and new!

**David McWilliams, Interim Session Clerk**

# Treasurer's Update

Well, where has this year gone? It's hard to believe that 2022 is now drawing to a close. Although it has been a wee while since my last magazine update, I have been keeping the Board updated with our financial position on a month by month basis.

Our finances are in a better position than I predicted at the start of the year, thanks to your ongoing generosity, to a resurgence in hall lets and restarting our hospitality events. In each of the last 6 months, to the end of September, our income has exceeded our expenditure – a fantastic position to be in!

Having developed a Covid-safe way of operating, we now have monthly coffee bars on the first Saturday of the month, with home-baking delivered to your table – no more queuing! We've also managed to hold two afternoon teas, in August and October, greatly enjoyed by all who attended, and have been able to offer hospitality after church every Sunday. These have combined to bring in over **£3,000!** Our hall lets have added another **£5,000!** We have also benefitted from a **£1,200** donation from the Bridge Choir as they sadly disbanded. Thank you to all the choir members.

Expenses have so far been less than budgeted for but with winter fast approaching heating/lighting expenses will soon start to ramp up. And some of our regular maintenance work as well as the renewal of the licences we need to allow us to play music, record and stream services etc are both coming up so we still have some hefty expenses to come. However I'm hopeful that we will still end the year in a much stronger financial position than anticipated at the start of the year.

Our biggest fundraising event, the Christmas Fayre on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, makes a welcome return this year after an enforced absence due to Covid, and we hope to see you there.

**Sue Sneddon**

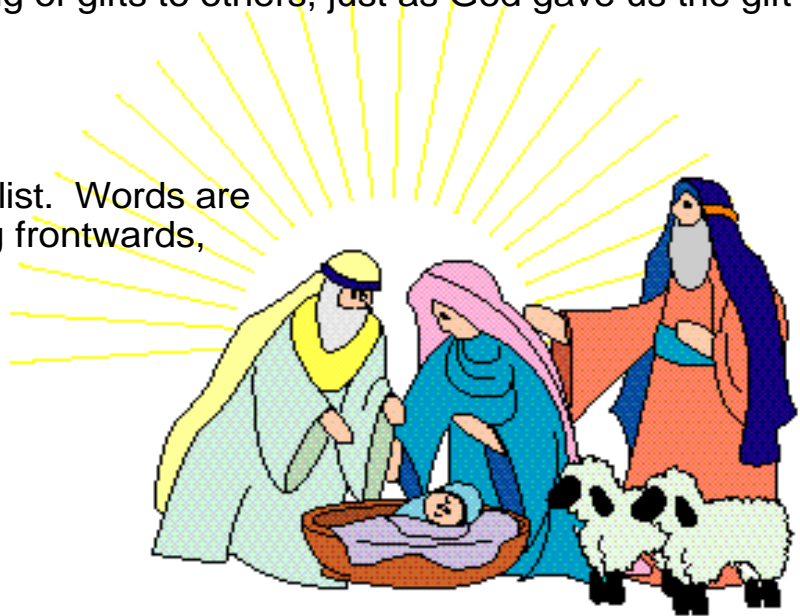


# Baby Jesus Word Search

Christmas is a very joyous holiday for Christians all around the world. This holiday marks the celebration of the birth of God's son Jesus. It is celebrated by attending church and the giving of gifts to others, just as God gave us the gift of his Son, Jesus.

## Directions:

Find all the words in the word list. Words are hidden in straight lines, going frontwards, backwards and diagonally.



## Word List

ANGEL  
 BABY  
 BETHLEHEM  
 BIRTH  
 DONKEY  
 GIFT  
 GLORY  
 GOD  
 HEAVEN  
 HOLY  
 INNKEEPER  
 JESUS  
 JOSEPH  
 KING  
 MANGER  
 MARY  
 MERCY  
 PEACE  
 REST  
 SAVIOUR  
 SHEPHERDS  
 SON  
 STAR  
 VIRGIN  
 WISE MEN

O	B	B	G	E	P	O	S	S	O	N	R	Y	Y	O
C	P	I	E	I	V	H	V	G	V	E	X	B	S	O
T	Z	E	R	T	F	D	C	I	P	N	A	R	P	V
O	G	Z	A	T	H	T	O	E	R	B	Q	H	H	U
C	B	O	C	C	H	L	E	N	J	G	M	T	R	O
G	C	N	A	C	E	K	E	S	K	O	I	J	H	M
O	Q	F	I	E	N	N	N	H	A	E	S	N	I	A
D	R	S	P	N	E	E	J	L	E	V	Y	E	E	R
K	E	U	I	M	V	H	E	Y	Y	M	I	Q	P	Y
I	S	Y	E	A	R	G	R	C	U	J	H	O	E	H
N	T	S	E	E	N	O	R	Y	F	C	E	L	U	J
G	I	H	G	A	L	E	E	C	A	R	Z	S	C	R
W	A	N	H	G	M	Q	T	C	I	J	W	G	U	Z
I	A	H	O	L	Y	S	T	A	R	M	P	K	J	S
M	M	J	U	C	D	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S

***Don't forget Gift Day is on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December.  
 Please bring an UNWRAPPED present to church.  
 These will be distributed to children who might not  
 otherwise receive a gift on Christmas Day.  
 Thank you.***

# Blythswood Shoebox Appeal



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal 2022. We were able to pass on 43 filled shoeboxes and drawstring bags together with five monetary donations to Blythswood Care at the

start of November.

These were gratefully received and will be

distributed to

vulnerable people in Ukraine, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. The small things we take for granted are luxuries for people living in poverty and will help bring some joy this Christmas.



## Church Roll

We have been saddened in recent months to hear of the death of the following members of our congregation:

**Christina Downie**

**Agnes Allen**

**Adam Millar**

**Wilhelmina Calder**

**Audrey Martindale**

**Doris Elcox**

**Doris Hendrie**

**Margaret Henderson**

**Jean Weir**

**Jean Taylor**

**Sheila Falconer**

**Elizabeth Simpson**

We send our condolences to their families for their loss.

***"For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." (Romans 14:8 ESV)***



# Christmas Crackers!



"I'm running behind. Can you take half the list and deliver the toys?"



# A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

**Loving Father,**

**Help us to remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.**

**Close the door of hate  
and open the door of love all over the world.**

**Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.**

**Deliver us from evil by the blessing  
which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.**

**May the Christmas morning  
make us happy to be thy children,  
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds  
with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving and forgiven,  
for Jesus' sake.**

**Amen.**

Broxburn Parish Church of Scotland

# Christmas Fayre



**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>  
December**

**12 noon - 3pm**

**Stalls**

**Home Baking**

**Christmas Hampers**

**Tombola & Raffle**

**Crafts**

**Books, CDs & DVDs**

**Meet Santa (£1.50)**

**FREE  
ENTRY!**



***Tea Tickets: £3***

**(includes tea, cakes and home baking)**

Scottish Charity Number: SC 0178170



# **Recipe Corner...Recipe Corner**

## **Gingerbread biscuits**

It's the time of year when gingerbread men make their big entrance so why not try this recipe and make your own. You can shape these biscuits however you want – they don't have to be cut like gingerbread men – but did you know that an upside-down gingerbread man can be decorated to look like a reindeer's head? (The legs become the antlers and the arms become the ears.) They taste delicious so why not have some fun with this recipe?

### **Ingredients**

- 350g plain flour
- 1-2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 100g butter
- 175g light brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 4 tablespoons black treacle



*(For a seasonal spiced flavour try adding ½ teaspoon of cinnamon, a pinch of nutmeg and some freshly grated orange rind along with the ginger).*

### **Method**

1. Preheat your oven to 190 degrees C (Gas Mark 5).
2. Sift flour, spices and bicarb into a bowl and rub in the butter.
3. Add the sugar to the mixture and stir in the treacle and the egg to create a firm dough
4. Roll out on a flour-dusted surface to a thickness of around 5mm and cut out your gingerbread shapes.
5. Place the shapes onto a greased/lined baking tray, leaving plenty of space between them. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes.

***Sue Sneddon***

# ○ ○ ○ POINTS to PONDER ○ ○ ○

## Introduction:

In this passage, Jesus is at a dinner party in a well-to-do part of town. What happens next is shocking – everybody knows what kind of woman this is – and yet Jesus allows her to anoint him and to wipe his feet with her hair.

## Text: Luke 7:36-50

*One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied. Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, cancelling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he cancelled the larger debt."*



*"That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume. "I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven." The men at the table said among themselves, "Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?" And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."*



## Points to Ponder:

One writer has said this: "If we consider ourselves deserving of having Jesus in our lives, we'll act towards him like the Pharisee did. He did what might have been expected of him, but no more. He treated Jesus with respect but did not love him. However, if we realise that we are like the woman, owing God an infinite debt, and piling up more and more debt each day, then we'll treat Jesus like she did. She didn't care what others thought of her. There was nothing she wouldn't do for him. She loved him.

If we've grasped Christ's forgiveness, we will offer every part of our lives to him. There will be no part of our life that is held back. While we may weep with grief at our sin, there will be tears of joy at our forgiveness. We too will love him."

## Prayer:

Loving Father, forgive us for the times when we act from misguided motives and think that we are better than others. Help us to love others as you have loved us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Action:

**Think about your own life. Admit to Jesus the ways in which you have sinned recently – where you have fallen short. Acknowledge that you deserve nothing from him; thank him with all your heart for his forgiveness; and offer all that you have and are to him.**

## ***Live streaming***

If you are unable to join us in person on a Sunday morning at 11am, you can watch a live stream of the worship service on our website:  
[broxburnparishchurch.org.uk](http://broxburnparishchurch.org.uk)

**We are all members of our church family.  
So if we can help you in any way,  
if you have a Prayer Request,  
or perhaps you just need a listening ear,  
please telephone: 07934 073349.  
Calls will of course be treated  
confidentially.**

## **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

The Kirk Session and  
Congregational Board of Broxburn  
Parish Church would like to wish  
all of our members, as well as  
their friends and family a very  
happy and blessed Christmas and  
a peaceful New Year.



**Broxburn Parish Church of Scotland**  
**[broxburnparishchurch.org.uk](http://broxburnparishchurch.org.uk)**

*Scottish Charity Number: SC 017180*

**FRIENDLY ○ FAMILY ○ FELLOWSHIP**