

Soundings

Portobello & Joppa Parish
Church Magazine

A full-page photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, with a bright orange and yellow glow from the setting sun breaking through in the center. The sun's light reflects on the water's surface. In the foreground, a sandy beach is visible, with some seaweed and rocks. A dark pier or breakwater extends from the left side into the water. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

February 2019

Portobello and Joppa Parish Church

**Worship takes place each Sunday at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church with
two services – one at 9.30am and one at 11am
(10.30am in July and August)**

From the editor



There's been much in the media about decluttering, and my personal resolution this year is to go through my parents' archives. There are a *lot* of photos, not all very good, and it's so hard to decide how many of these to keep. In his letter, Stewart encourages us, in this new year, to make our faith "echo down the years", which is a lovely and inspiring thought. I certainly don't want to echo down the years as a person who was unable to throw anything out.

Should you wish to declutter by donating some warm clothing – or some new underwear or socks - to Bethany, these items would be gratefully accepted, as you can read in the magazine. Other than that, lots of the content this month is about young people: Messy Church, the backpack appeal (for children who own very little, and certainly no clutter), the Holiday Club, the Year of Young People and the Breakfast Club. Not only does Michelle oversee all these things but she also finds the time to write articles for "Soundings" about them – thanks so much, Michelle, for all you do.

Stewart also invites you to gatherings in the sanctuary to think about pastoral care and spirituality.

And there are contrasting contributions from members – Moira tells us about her tights (possibly a first for a church magazine), Mary recalls the Stockbridge of her youth and Linda gives us her thoughts about one of the miracles of Jesus.

There's a thank-you to Stewart and Lourens for their kindness to the Herriot family; another to everyone for their gifts to children in Craigmillar and Magdalene; and yet another from Ian on behalf of St Columba's.

And you're reminded not to miss "Brodie", the revival of the Drama Group's splendid home-grown musical – get your tickets now!

Pam

From the minister



Dear Friends and Neighbours,

Radical is a word I have used and bandied about recently. My musings stemmed from the General Assembly of 2018, when one proposed strategy was set aside and another, more radical strategy was proposed.

I wondered how many of those who requested a radical plan would actually agree some of the decisions, sacrifices and changes that would be required to be radical. I also wondered how we as a congregation and a church could perhaps think about, ponder or even embrace some radical thinking, planning and doing.

What has happened since then?

Er, not nearly as much as initially envisioned. We've talked a bit in some committees about possibilities and there have been some initiatives (refugees, isolation, mental health) that have drawn some attention. But, really, far less than might be necessary.

My first university professor in college suggested that the key historical question was this one: why poppa?

'Why?' indeed.

Amongst the services and amongst the committee meetings, amongst the visits and amongst the e-mails, amongst the conversations and amongst the everyday tasks that just keep a church running and going and vibrant, those initiatives that break new ground are so hard to fit in. They require time, patience, thinking, planning and conversations with others. Otherwise they go nowhere. One person alone cannot do something radical, neither you or me.

So, why bother?

We all know the challenges facing the church. Let's not go over that ground again.

There have been moments, however, when we have stepped outside the comfort zone and the vista is fascinating.

We hosted the Harmony Choir, thanks to the energy of Mike Ferguson. Talking to people who support mental health initiatives, with their passion and their stories of appreciation and healing, is truly remarkable.

I visited a refugee family. I couldn't find the address and asked a neighbour. 'Oh, them. There are a few around here.' Such distance if not coldness and disdain. I found the family and they were pleasant, appreciative, full of humour and exuded a humbling dignity even in the midst of housing and flats that were not the height of luxury.

We have enjoyed together services led by our Breakfast Club and benefitted from their enthusiasm, their musical tastes and their creativity. We have enjoyed a service put together by our Worship and Education Team and the variety and depth of contributions gave us much pause for thought. We will soon be welcoming our older primary children into our communion services because we have given them space to wonder, to learn (lots of Godly Play about the sacraments) and to ask questions.

These may not be thunderbolts from the blue. Indeed, it would be grand (on one level) to have far more to highlight (and I'm sure I've forgotten a number of others).

But these are green shoots. There is a culture now being prepared not out of desperation for the sake of our church and our congregation, that it may remain as it has aye been. These are movements precisely because there is so much for us to learn and discover and enjoy and appreciate precisely when we are radical, precisely when we leave the comfort zone, precisely when we put up our hands and say: 'This, *this* is important to me and it's important to the work of God in this world!'

Who of us will ever forget that person or those persons who seemed to embody the Christian faith to us? Who of us will ever forget the wisdom, the comfort,

the love, the care, the fire, the inspiration that brought us into the economy of God's grace?

Who of us wouldn't want our faith to echo down the years and generations, knowing that, because we have been imaginative, creative, bold and radical, many lives have been touched by the love of Christ?

Now, there's a vision to behold in this new year.

Stewart

Pastoral Care and Spirituality

We as a group of local churches (PACT: Portobello Area Christians Together) are hosting a series of four gatherings led by members of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Glasgow. Interweaving two items and issues vital to the life of any congregation seemed to be of such importance.

These will take place in the **sanctuary of Portobello and Joppa Parish Church at 7.30pm** on the dates below. Please do join us.

In an age when life seems to move too swiftly, when we wish we could pause a bit more often to learn more about ourselves and God's peace, when we wish we knew how to offer words of true comfort and insight to others, this is a brilliant, God-given opportunity.

Sunday 10 February

Sunday 24 February

Sunday 10 March

Sunday 24 March

Stewart

Messy Church



Messy Church had a busy autumn. In September we had a big welcome with Open Doors Day and shared a BBQ dinner. In October, we thought about Jesus, the Light of the World and what it means to be a light in the world too. In November, we celebrated Thanksgiving and gave thanks to God for our blessings. We also sent our Messy Church Knitted Nativity, the knitivity, on its journey around the houses for Advent. It returned to PJPC on Christmas Eve at the 4pm worship service. On December 22, we spent time together Christmas Carolling and doing Christmas crafts.

It was a great autumn and we are looking forward to more Messy Fun for the whole family as we gather again this winter. On 26 January, we heard about John the Baptist. On 23 February, we will learn about Daniel and the Lion's Den. On 30 March, we will explore more about Passover as we share the Exodus story.

Messy Church meets on the last Saturday of every month here at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church from 3:30pm to 6pm. We gather in the hall for games and snacks at the start before going into the church for our celebration time. This is the time when we share the Bible story of the day, share a prayer activity and sing a song together before we head out to the halls for crafts and games for all ages. Around 5:30pm we finish up with dinner and dessert.

Messy Church is an informal, relaxed atmosphere where everyone is welcome (of any faith or none). All ages are welcome, though we ask for safety that children come accompanied by an adult. There is no cost, but we put out a free will donation bowl at the door. If you would like more information, contact Michelle.



Collecting Backpacks as the Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Community

In 2019 the Breakfast Club - the youth group at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church - is leading a project to collect backpacks filled with school items for Mary's Meals. We are inviting the full parish community and congregation from the Toddlers' Playgroup to Messy Church, from the Brownies to Company Section of the Boys Brigade, from the Coffee Club to the Junior Drama Group, from the Guild to the Twins Group all to take part in this project.

Mary's Meals is a non-profit organisation which works to provide a free meal a day for children in poverty at their place of education. This guarantees that the children will have had at least one meal a school day and it encourages the children to attend school and get the education they need to rise out of poverty. The mission of Mary's Meals is "to enable people to offer their money, goods, skills, time, or prayer, and through this involvement, provide the most effective help to those suffering the effects of extreme poverty in the world's poorest communities".

The Backpack project is part of all this. Children at these schools receive a backpack full of the necessities for school to continue to encourage them to attend school. Items for the backpacks include: a notepad, pencils, pens, crayons, eraser, ruler, sharpener, pencil case, towel, shorts/skirt and t-shirt or dress, flip flops/sandals, small ball (tennis ball), soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, and a spoon.

From 20 January to 31 March, the Breakfast Club will be collecting donations of backpacks full of the items listed above or even donations of some of the items on their own (which can then be used to top up other backpacks as necessary). Tags with a list of items needed can be collected from entrances to the church or from Michelle Brown. Please label your bag for a boy or girl and indicate the age of the child (between 4-12 years old). Please only donate items from the list as the bags must be the same to go through customs – NO food, liquids, or sweets.

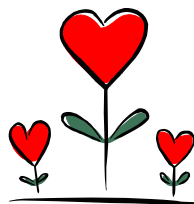
Please return donations to the collection tubs in the vestry or in the hallway outside of the main hall.

We also look forward to welcoming in John Helliwell from Mary's Meals on 24 March when he will speak with the congregation about the ongoing work of Mary's Meals. An opportunity to donate financially towards the meals provided will also be available that day.

We do hope you will be able to help contribute to the backpack project! For more information, please contact Michelle.

Dear Stewart and members of P & Js,

This is a quick note to say a heartfelt thank you for your wonderful generosity in giving us so many selection packs in the run up to Christmas.



Such was your generosity that we were able to give to the children in Craigmillar Primary, as in previous years, but also for the first time to the children who attend the Magdalene Community Centre. This has greatly enhanced the relationship between St. Martin's and the centre and we are extremely grateful to you all.

I wish you all God's richest blessing for the New Year and thank you once again.

Every blessing,
Bill

Portobello Holiday Club 2019



This summer, our Portobello Holiday Club is running for the fifth year with six area churches working together. From the 22nd to the 26th of July, from 9am to 12:30pm, our halls at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church and at St Mark's Scottish Episcopal Church will be full of children and volunteers. We will be welcoming in school-aged children each morning of the week to take part in arts and crafts, games, music, drama, gardening, baking, Bible study, worship, snack and many surprises throughout the week. There will also be a crèche available for volunteers' children younger than primary school. We hope your family will join us! Registration will open in March. Contact Michelle to get registrations forms from 1 March. The cost is £2 per day per child.

We are also recruiting volunteers to help with all aspects of the holiday club. If you can give a full week in July to this ministry, or even if you can only give a day or two, we'd love your help. We're looking for help with games, arts and crafts, baking, music, drama, AV technology, snacks, crèche care, administration, small group leaders, and much more.

There will be a training morning for the full team on a Saturday in June and a further team meeting in July. All volunteers will need to complete an application form for Michelle Brown and sort their PVG record application with Carol Brackenridge. New volunteers also need to get one reference, plus a minister reference.

If you are interested in helping with our ecumenical holiday club or if you know any secondary students who might be interested in volunteering as Junior Helpers then please speak with Michelle on any Sunday after church or email her at portobelloholidayclub@gmail.com We would love to have as many helpers as possible as the more volunteers we have, the more families we can welcome to take part.

Michelle

- 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR -

PORTOBELLO AND JOPPA PARISH CHURCH
DRAMA GROUP PRESENTS



BRODIE!

THE MUSICAL

BY GAVIN BOOTH & NANCY KENT



TUES 19 - SAT 23 MARCH 2019, 7.30^{PM}

PORTOBELLO & JOPPA PARISH CHURCH

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ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE ON BRUNSTANE ROAD NORTH

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OR EMAIL ANNE.MCKERCHAR@GMAIL.COM

Ye

Year Of Young People Review

At Portobello and Joppa Parish Church, our year of young people has gone quite fast. We held our usual youth group retreats and Easter Vigil. We once again hosted the ecumenical holiday club in Portobello and our Sunday Stars led the usual fundraisers - Baked Potato Sunday and Cupcake Sunday. However, in the middle of our usual events, we found some new directions to take family ministry thanks to pausing in the business of the year to stop and listen to our children and young people. Year of Young people was a catalyst year that has given PJPC new opportunities to take forward.

Our youth group, the Breakfast Club took part in Future Focus with our congregation. The young people asked for more opportunity to contribute to worship in the church and change up our worship style and music from time to time. This led to the youth planning and leading all age worship for Palm Sunday and Harvest. Both services were inspirational and the young people have asked for more opportunity to lead again.

This year marks the start of a new young adults' group. We have seven young people about to graduate from the youth group and they are all wanting something after Breakfast Club. To this end, we are starting up a young adults' house group meeting once a month at the manse for young people aged 16-25 years old.

In October, we took our youth away on retreat as we do each autumn, but we were amazed to find that we needed three mini-buses to get to Loch Tay as we had 23 young people and 6 leaders on retreat. It was a fantastic retreat – giving our group time to get to know each other better and make lasting memories.

Our Sunday Stars (aged 3-P7) had a full year as well. We held our annual baked potato Sunday fundraiser which this year raised money for the Boys Brigade at

PJPC. It was to celebrate all the amazing work the Boys Brigade does in Portobello and support all the young people who take part.

We held “Have Your Say” discussions with our children. Many interesting ideas came out of these discussions. The ideas of the Sunday Stars and the Breakfast Club were shared with our Kirk Session and the congregation. Some have already been taken forward – including children on the welcome team, more time in church, having more activities outside and welcoming refugees into the church for food/events. The discussions also sparked a really important question from one of our 8 year olds – “Why can’t I come in for communion?” Her question was asked in January and it led to a year full of discussions with worship/education team and our Kirk Session. Now, the decision has been made to welcome P3-P7 into our quarterly communion and in April, they will be joined by the P1/P2 children. This will begin from January communion - a great start to the next year and a definite way our church is moving forward in welcoming and including young people after taking part in Year of Young People.

There have been many ways that our children and young people have been invited to contribute to the church through worship, fellowship and discipleship. Our social team at PJPC is looking at intergenerational events and there is talk of a church picnic in June. The social team worked alongside our Messy Church team for an intergenerational BBQ in September as part of Open Doors Weekend. The Guild has invited some of our youth to speak in February and some of our youth group members assisted with the Guild’s Christmas Coffee Morning. A church elder visited the youth group this past month to work on part of the poppy display our church had for Remembrance Sunday. The Pastoral Care committee invited our youth group to be welcomers at the afternoon tea party held twice a year for the elderly members and friends of our church with their befrienders. It has been fantastic to see the generations mixing more at PJPC.

This has been a wonderful year and perhaps the most exciting part of this year is that it is just the start. We will continue to listen to our young people and provide opportunities for intergenerational connection and genuine opportunities for our children and young people to have leadership roles in the church. This is not contained to one year, but will be a change we carry on for years to come.

Michelle



Stockbridge in the forties

I got a lovely surprise when I read in the paper that Ann Street in Stockbridge was the most expensive street in Edinburgh. I didn't live in it, but walked past it every weekday on my way to school, in the years that I lived in Edinburgh with my grandmother.

That was when I was between the ages of eleven and sixteen. I also had the pleasure of having a walk along the Water of Leith to the Botanic Gardens and Inverleith playing fields. Also, in those days there were lovely bakers' shops. When my grandmother collected her "divi" (dividend) from the Co-op in Bread Street, she would give me some for spending money, and I'd often spent it all in a baker's shop before I got home.

Parts of the Colonies were just being built and the first street was lucky, as it overlooked the Water of Leith and had lots of green grass.

Happy memories!

Mary

Thank you



My family and I would like to thank Stewart for all the care and support he gave us recently.

When I phoned Stewart and said Walter was in hospital, having suffered a severe stroke, he came in to visit. When he heard that Walter had died, he made arrangements to visit us to discuss what we wanted to do. Stewart wanted to know how Walter and I had met and actually it was all down on paper, written by Walter for my cousin to sort out her speech on the occasion of our diamond wedding in November 2017. Then Stewart needed up-to-date information and the family gave him plenty of that.

A couple of days after his visit, he sent a draft to me and my youngest daughter, Jenny. Then came some additions and some changes. I am sure he must have had nightmares when he saw emails from us, thinking – what now??? But then in no time at all he came back with the finished tribute.

He gave Walter an excellent send-off, as many who were there at the service will tell you. He was very kind and caring and we all appreciated it very much.

Thank you, Stewart.

A note for Lourens - You came on a visit to Walter and me a few weeks before he took ill. After you left, Walter said how much he had enjoyed it and said he hoped you would come again very soon.

Thank you, Lourens.

Marlene

Breakfast Club



This October, we took our youth group away on retreat to Abernethy Trust, Ardeonaig on Loch Tay. The Breakfast Clubbers took part in team building activities, low ropes course, high ropes course, archery and canoeing. We spent some time having a faith discussion and some time worshipping together.

We shared lots of food and laughs throughout the weekend. It was a great retreat – especially because of the amazing turnout. We took 23 secondary students and 6 adult helpers away for the weekend. There were so many participants that we needed two mini-buses and a van to get us all there. Thank you very much to the drivers and leaders who shared their weekend with the youth group and thank you very much to each young person who took part in the weekend. It was wonderful to get to know each other better and explore faith a bit more while we had time away from our busy lives back home.

Meanwhile, during the school year, on Sunday mornings the smell of sausage and bacon rolls fills the church hallways as the Breakfast Club gathers together for discussion and activities on faith and life. We also have a couple social events and hold our annual Easter Vigil overnight in the church.

The Breakfast Club is for young people in secondary school and anyone is welcome to join us so if you know a secondary student who might be interested in coming along, then please let them know about us. We meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30am – 10:30am in the main hall during the school year.

For more information on Breakfast Club or to be on an email list for the social events, please contact Michelle.

A Voice Calling in the Wilderness



For many people, the Bible is nothing more than a dusty old relic, full of out-dated stories that have no bearing on today.

Sometimes I wonder if this is not in part down to a lack of understanding or imagination, and the inability to see through what appears at first glance to be outdated? I think we forget that long, long ago, stories of Jesus spread like wildfire through towns, villages, homes and hearts.

Jesus travelled many miles spreading the Good News: healing, teaching and embracing wholeheartedly those forced to the fringe of society.

Take for example the healing of the woman, in the Gospel of Luke (13; 10- 17). Here we find the story of a woman who has been unable to straighten up, through illness, infirmity or, as some translations describe, a demonic spirit.

In this passage, Jesus heals the woman from her condition on the Sabbath. The synagogue ruler is furious and accusingly turns to Jesus and the people and says, "There are six days for work, so come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath!" To which Jesus replies, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what has bound her?"

What is interesting to note here is that the woman herself made no request for healing. She did not draw any attention to herself by crying out or pushing her way forwards towards Jesus. One explanation for this is that her spirit was crushed from years of living with her condition, and the barrage of abuse hurled at her.

There is an old saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me!" I beg to differ. Derogatory remarks do hurt; especially if spoken long enough, and loud enough. Steeped head-to-toe in shame, this woman had only one thing in mind that day: to behave as if invisible.

Jesus was unconventional, perhaps one could even say radical, in His treatment

of women. Jesus elevated women and here is a perfect example of this.

Perhaps you can visualise this woman from Luke's Gospel: body bowed down, eyes seeing only the dirt beneath her feet, as she feels the waft of air as other people walk by. Imagine her despair, her feelings of hopelessness, and loneliness. How might Jesus be looking at her? Try to imagine this woman, as seen through His eyes.

We know that Jesus saw beyond her outward appearance, because in front of all those assembled who were too quick to label and ignore her, Jesus called her forward. Imagine the timidity with which she moved into the limelight, carrying her mantle of shame, not knowing what was about to happen to her.

Never for one moment could she have conceived that she was precious in God's eyes, for this had not been reflected back to her in a long, long time. In fact she may have lived without ever knowing God's love for her existed.

I have known women so low in their opinions of themselves that they never asked for anything. Women who were very reluctant or unable to reach out for help, because their circumstances had left them emotionally, physically, spiritually and financially bankrupt.

Women who remained loyal despite years of mental, emotional and physical abuse.

How does a woman today, living in abusive circumstances, stand tall? How does she lift her head to meet the gaze of her child's teacher at parents evening, or colleagues in the workplace, or even in church for that matter? And what does an abused woman look like? Not all bruises are on the outside.

Poet Maya Angelou describes the way in which men and women in oppressive circumstances learn to conceal their true feelings when she writes "...we wear the mask, that grins and lies, it shades our cheeks and hides our eyes..."

Shame is as powerful as any demonic spirit. Shame is as crippling, debilitating, and paralysing as any physical condition. But unlike the lepers Jesus healed, whose afflictions were clearly visible, shame lives on the inside, like a cancer slowly dissolving a healthy sense of self.

Therefore I find this passage of scripture to be very relevant. It simply needs readdressing: its message translated into today's money, one could say.

And so I wonder, was Jesus attempting to highlight a form of social sickness (injustice) through this example of healing; using the Sabbath as a backdrop to demonstrate His point?

His was a voice crying out in a patriarchal society. Let's not forget that Jesus, was born to Mary, an un-wed teenage mother, from whose eyes shone only love, despite - I'm sure - the stigma and name-calling she must have faced.

Jesus came to minister to those who were sick and in need of a doctor, and not those who believed themselves righteous (Mark 2; 17). Jesus elevated this nameless woman above ox and donkey, by reminding everyone present, including the woman herself, that she was "a daughter of Abraham" (Luke 13; 16).

Jesus' words were said to humiliate his opponents (Luke 13; 17). In the Touchpoint Bible (NLT) it reads "this **shamed** His enemies...".

Jesus broke the chains of bondage over this woman, and she stood tall and praised God, for she was free at last... or was she?

In her book *When a Woman Meets Jesus*, author Dorothy Valcarcel describes the night she sat at the bedside of a very close friend who had attempted suicide. On regaining consciousness her friend whispered to Dorothy, "I wish somebody truly loved me." Words the author says she will "never forget...".

These words have stayed with me since first reading, because I know that this sentiment and this longing to be loved continues and will continue to ring out across time. Which leads me to share this slightly humorous post script to this article.

Having set this writing aside, I was out shopping when I was approached by two men in Leith Kirkgate, brandishing good cheer! – and giving me no option but to stop.

One of them, the more charismatic of the two, reached out his hand, introduced himself, asked my name and then said with a huge beaming smile, "GOD LOVES

YOU!”

Much to my surprise and with a little hint of mischief in my voice, and I’m sure a twinkle in my eye... I leaned in and - cloaked in the majesty of God’s love, and looking him dead in the eye - replied “**YES... I KNOW!**” as if I were the one letting him in on the Good News!

Then off I went smiling, silently praising God; past the woman trying to sell me a broadband package, and on past the political activists seeking signatures for a petition against Universal Credit.

Until that moment it had been just an ordinary day, but afterwards I realised just how that woman in Luke must have felt. Because I was feeling it too.

Linda Small

Thank You

Every Christmas for many years we at P&JPC have helped raise in excess of £900 for St. Columba's Hospice and sales of calendars and cards for 2018 again raised £967.50. I wish to thank everyone who bought cards and calendars from my weekly Sunday stall and hopefully I will be there for you all next Christmas.

Many thanks, **Ian**

St Columba’s say in their letter of thanks to Ian that “this will enable us to continue to support people to live as they choose for as long as they can, with our team of skilled and dedicated staff and volunteers providing care and compassion to those people and their loved ones”. Congratulations once more, Ian!



The tale of a cat

The day had arrived for our yearly Coffee Club Christmas outing to Peebles. I had my shower, got dressed and had breakfast, cutting short an important phone call so as not to be late.

While having a last-minute visit to the bathroom, I heard a commotion outside the front door. It was my cat, who had escaped through the bathroom window and was being attacked by another cat. (She doesn't normally get out, as she's very timid.) With my tights half-down, I rushed to unlock the door. But once outside, I couldn't see her.

My neighbour appeared. (I was glad I had a skirt on, to hide my tights!) Together we looked for the cat. She was behind the garden shed - the cat that she doesn't like was walking away.

With my cat safely inside, but now running late, I got to the bus stop. Impatiently, I waited. No bus. Then I saw Janet, who I knew was also going on the outing, coming out of her house and getting into her car. She was just reversing - and got the fright of her life as I appeared suddenly at the side of her car, asking for a lift.

She took me down to the church and I made it on time. We had a lovely day and a wonderful Christmas meal.

I won't forget that morning in a hurry.

Moir

(The editor assumes that Moira's tights got sorted out eventually.)

A Call to Prayer



Reading, researching, remembering and reflecting on God’s word – these things are important, but we must also *respond* to it and be “doers of God’s word” (James 1, 22). This is the hardest step. You can be so busy going to the next church meeting that you forget to put into practice what you learned at the last one.

Jesus said, “Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house upon the rock.” (Matthew 7, 24).

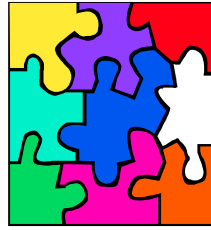
We’re inclined to avoid practical application because not only is it hard - it’s sometimes downright painful. “The truth will set you free” (John 8,32) but first it may make you uncomfortable. That’s why it’s good to discuss your personal insights with other people. We learn truths from others that we might not have learned on our own.

One of the best ways to become a “doer” is to write down an action plan, which should be personal, practical and provable – maybe with a deadline. The Bible can change your life – if you let it.

Harry,
Prayer Promoter

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Brain teaser



I've been thinking about Mary Magdalene this month and have made up a puzzle using the letters of her name.

Can you work out the clues? I've given you every second letter of the answers. Should be easy!

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| M - R - | The second Gospel writer |
| A - T - | The first book of the New Testament <i>after</i> the Gospels |
| R - M - N - | They ruled the Holy Land when Jesus was born |
| Y - A - | This is the second month of a new one of these |
| | |
| M - C - H | He was a prophet and has his own book in the Old Testament |
| A - O - | So was he and so does he. |
| G - N - S - S | The first book of the Bible |
| D - N - E - | ... in the lions' den |
| A - G - L - | They came to proclaim Jesus' birth |
| L - K - | Another Gospel writer |
| E - O - U - | The second book of the Bible |
| N - M - E - S | Another Old Testament book - in which there are censuses |
| E - E - I - L | Another prophet with his own book. |

Alison



Getting to know you – Pam

I couldn't persuade anyone to do this feature this month, so because I had a space to fill (and also in the spirit of don't-ask-anyone-to-do-something-you're-not-prepared-to-do-yourself) I decided to answer the questions myself. That sound you hear is indeed the scraping of the bottom of a barrel. If anyone would like to volunteer themselves (or someone else) for future months, *please do so!*

Both sets of my grandparents joined St Philip's in the early 1930s and the family has been here (now PJPC) ever since. I've been in the Sunday School (as child and leader of various sections), Bible Class, Youth Fellowship, Young Woman's Group and am now an elder and editor of PJPC's "Soundings" – which is (mostly) a fun job.

Q. What is a favourite hymn, and why?

A. "Love came down at Christmas". I like the tune, the words, the ideas, the structure of the verses and the memories of childhood that it evokes.

Q. What is an early church memory?

A. Kneeling on the floor in what is now Lourens and Mishia's sitting room (but was then used for Sunday school) and drawing a picture by leaning on the seat of a small wooden chair. No luxuries like tables for us in those days!

Q. What are you reading at the moment?

A. "Nella Last's War" – the Mass Observation diary of an ordinary woman detailing her everyday life during World War Two. Fascinating.

Q. What luxury would you take to a desert island?

A. A library.

Q. What kind of music do you listen to?

A. Classical all the way. Handel's "Water Music" is always soothing.

Q. What do you miss (or *not* miss) about being a child?

A. I was a worried child, so I don't miss that, but I'd love to see my grandparents again.

Q. What gets you up in the morning (apart from your alarm clock)?

A. Guilt, mainly – thinking of all the things I need to do. And a cup of tea, made by my husband (thank you).

Q. What makes your heart sing?

A. Our family, beautiful gardens and singing itself.



Bethany Christian Care Van and Night Shelter

We would still like new underwear and socks to take to the homeless and also any warm jumpers, fleeces or jackets. Sleeping bags are often asked for as well.

Please don't bring light-weight clothes - warm clothes are best. Also, as the homeless are often younger men who are not large, big sizes aren't suitable.

Contributions should be left in the flower room off the front vestibule of the church. Thank you!

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April 2019

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May 2019

Sunday 21st April 2019

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