

From the Kirk Session



The Christmas services are all now in the past – I hope you managed to get to some of them, and enjoyed the Advent candles, Christmas tree and other decorations – as well as the worship!

Some things you need to know following the Kirk Session meeting in December: first, we agreed that Sunday morning services should revert to 11 am for the next 6 months – and we'll look again at service times next summer. Second, we have adopted as a congregation the **Church of Scotland's Whistleblowing policy**, which you can view in full on the Church of Scotland website (<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/law-circulars>) – near the foot of the page. In short, if you see something being done (or not being done) as it should be, please contact me, Rosie Townsley or the minister in the first instance.

The **Finance Team presented their budget for next year**, with expenditure of £89,500 which includes a contribution for Ministry and Mission of £54,000.

The **Mission Team** is still looking at sources of funding for a paid youth/families worker, and on details of a proposed Parent & Toddler group. We agreed that TCC would be part of the new 'Growing

Young' programme – which runs over 2 years from early 2023, and will help us to reach out to our community.

If you have been in church over the Christmas period you will have seen that the ceiling has been fixed, and that the organ looks fine – there are still a few internal repairs to be made before the organ can be put back in use. We also agreed in principle (but subject to the agreement of the General Trustees) to replace the central block of pews in the church with (comfortable) chairs – we'll follow this up early in the New Year. We're also looking at more radical changes that might be made to the interior of the church, to make it more flexible.

We also noted the membership statistics since the Union in April – we have had 7 new members, but have lost 2 members by transfer to other congregations, and, sadly, 20 members who have died since April. Our membership at the year end was 199, plus 5 adherents (people who are not full members, but are allowed to vote in congregational decisions).

The 'big' news is that from 1st January 2023 Lothian Presbytery will be joined up with others in the south-east of Scotland to form Lothian and Borders Presbytery – and we don't know yet how this will affect our lives as a congregation.

May I wish you all a very happy New Year.
Neil Cape, (joint) Session Clerk (674276) new email address: tccsessionclerk@gmail.com

MESSY HAPPENINGS

The beginning of December found our Messy team getting right into Christmas mode.



Saturday December 3rd was the day when the Christmas lights were switched on in the town, and we decided to offer something as part of the celebrations: Messy Christmas Crafts, from 2pm till 5pm. Our first guests arrived as we opened the doors, and we had to chase that last ones out to see the Christmas tree lights being lit. In between there was never a dull moment, as families came in a steady stream, mums and dads, grandparents, babies in buggies, toddlers, primary school children and a few older ones. We lost count – but we know that 60 Advent candles were made, and that not all of the little ones made one of those. Advent candles helped us talk about why, as Christians, we look forward to Christmas, lolly stick angels got us to the heart of the Christmas story, and then there were stained glass windows and the scratch art Christmas trees, to help us talk about all the things we do to celebrate Christmas. Little ones produced some interesting drawings, and all were refreshed with biscuits, juice, or hot drinks.



Sunday December 4th was our (early) Christmas Messy Church. Slightly less hectic, as the number of people was smaller, but that meant we all had plenty of time to chat, spending some meaningful

time with each family. Hunting for a variety of nativity scenes and spotting what was missing from each one (or what was there that shouldn't be!) provided a lot of fun for old and young alike. We made angels again, this time using dolly pegs (we'd run out of lolly sticks), while the youngsters decided that feathers made much better wings than winding yet more wool! Some lovely Christmas pictures were produced, and some very beautifully decorated boxes, into which were placed some carefully decorated "Christmas pudding (or bauble)" biscuits to give away as a gift to someone who might not be getting any presents. More Christmas trees, and some wonderful poppers (amazing what you can do with a paper cup, a balloon and some sticky tape!).

Our celebration time was great fun: a fun telling of the nativity story, ably helped by Sheila and a wee team of puppeteers, and some carol singing. One of our families is from Peru, and they were happy to teach us Spanish words for "Joy to the world" – that proved a great success.

We finished with a roast chicken dinner (with sausages, roast potatoes and veg...but no sprouts!) And for pudding there was fruit, and home baking, and a welcome cup of tea!

For 2023 we will be meeting on the LAST Sunday of each month, beginning with January 29th.



Scripture Union Prayer Meeting - Saturday 28 Jan 10.30am



Derek Harley, Local Ministry Coordinator East and Midlothian, is planning to hold a series of monthly local prayer gatherings across East and Midlothian this year, starting in Penicuik Trinity Community Church Hall on Saturday 28 January starting at 10.30am and moving across the region to finish in Dunbar in September. Please come along to pray for the young people and schools in our region.

Trinity Community Diary

8, 15, 22, 29 January 7.15 pm	Sunday evening Prayer Meeting - Church Hall
9, 16, 23 January 7.30pm	Monday Bible Study Group - Zoom. Details from Capes 674276
9 January 2.00pm	Guild:- Anna Hunter talks on Harm Reduction Drugs Dependency: Church Hall
11, 18, 25 January 10.00am	Wednesday Bible Study Group - Church Hall (committee room)
19, 26 January 10.00am to 12 noon	Coffee and Chat - Church Hall
28 January 10.30am	Scripture Union Prayer Meeting - Church Hall
29 January 3.30pm to 5.30pm	Messy Church - Church Hall
31 January 7.30pm	Kirk Session Meeting - Church Hall

Pastoral Care - Please remember that we are always here for church members and for anyone in the community, and you are welcome to phone (in confidence) at any time for a chat, prayer, or to source other help or to request a visit; Either: John Urquhart (01968 382116; Margaret Webster (01968 672347 or 07761 096 472) or Wilma Wilson (07719 665505)



You can read this newsletter at Penicuik Trinity Community Church website <https://www.penicuiktrinitycommunity.church>. To sign up for an eCopy of this newsletter to be sent direct to your inbox each month, saving paper and other resources, just send a request email to penicuiktrinitycommunitymedia@gmail.com

Church mouse

From the mouse of Editor's PC



Our first Christmas as Trinity Community church

introduced new ideas mixed with traditional worship. Our first advent service on 27 November featured Paul Haringman the ACORN National Director (Scotland), as a guest speaker. We have been hearing about this movement that seeks to connect Christians with the work God through caring conversation. Acorn does this through missional discipleship, by involving some Christian friends and sending them out to try the acronym A-C-O-R-N. Our Nativity service also featured a novel way of presenting the coming of Christ Jesus, much enjoyed by the congregation of all ages.

Families with young children also enjoyed our All Age Christmas Eve and Day services, as well as our 'Messy Church' events.

The new year brings a full calendar of events, some restarting after the Christmas break, others new.

Enjoy this review of our Christmas events and hope you can join us in some of our many events and services in 2023

Happy New Year to all our readers.

Jim Paterson
Newsletter Editor
penicuiktrinitycommunitymedia@gmail.com

Christmas at Trinity Community Church

The period of Advent, 'waiting for the coming king', started with our service on **27 November**, when we lit the candle of 'Hope'

Our eyes were drawn to the advent wreath of holly mounted on the font with the five candles, 4 in a circle and one in the centre, the 'Christ candle'.



During the service the first candle was lit and Martin Eadie, a regular visitor to our services, took the honour of lighting this candle.

There are many interpretations of the Advent candles. We believe the candles stand for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.



We had a guest speaker, Paul Haringman, the ACORN National Director (Scotland), who talked to us of his experiences following the ACORN programme that we have recently been hearing about.

The service on **4 December** was both the second Sunday of Advent 'Peace', and our Kirk in Penicuik joint Church of Scotland service with Penicuik North Kirk joining us as we continued the Five Marks of Mission - Treasuring (Part 2).



The third Sunday of Advent 'Joy' on **11 December** we lit our third candle, with John preaching on 'Mary's Song'.



For the fourth Advent Sunday on **18 December** 'Love', we lit the all the candles bar the Christ candle

in the centre of the ring. Martin once again agreed to light this candle. John preached Zechariah's song



We also presented our Nativity service; 'A Rumour of Angels' by Don Dowling, which was a little different to the usual presentation. Set in Bethlehem town Hall, it tells how even Angel Gabriel (played by David Hogg) had problems with the local council (played by Joyce Maclean) to arrange the correct 'paperwork' for the



imminent arrival of the Messiah.

Watch our video of this service at :-

<https://youtu.be/IQOWhVTczEc>

See Christmas Eve and Christmas Day stories later in this issue.

Christmas at Trinity Community - December 2022

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Services

We celebrated the coming of the new King with two services on Christmas Eve, a family 'All Age' service at 4.30pm and a traditional 'Watchnight' service at 11.30pm which took us through the midnight hour into Christmas Day.

Christmas Eve All Age Service was led by Joan Cape, with Andrew Dunsire on guitar and Graham McDonald on piano leading our praise.



Joan tested us with a quiz to see if we could guess 'who lived there?' The first was quickly guessed as Paddington Bear,

The second was a little more difficult, though our younger visitors soon worked it out. The owl and the hat gave it away. Of course it was Harry Potter.

Our next clue was also quickly worked out by our younger congregation.

If it's honey, then it has to be Pooh bear.

A little trickier was 221b Baker Street, home to Sherlock Holmes.

This led to our final address, Bethlehem, which of course was the birthplace of the baby Jesus.

In the background we could see the wisemen and the shepherds following the star to the stable and manger with baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

32 Windsor Gardens
LONDON

4 Privet Drive
LITTLE WHINGING

The Hollowed Tree
100 Acre Wood

221b Baker Street
LONDON



Carol Singing in the Precinct - Saturday 17th December

Members from across the churches in Penicuik braved the severe frosty morning weather, to gather at the precinct on the morning of Saturday 17th.

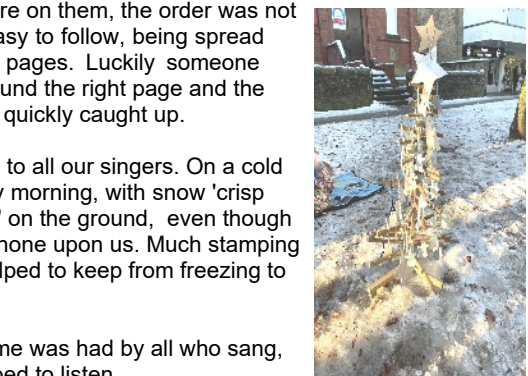
The passing shoppers were entertained with a wide selection of Christmas carols, including 'Hark! the herald angels sing', 'We three kings of orient are', 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night' and many more with musical accompaniment from Sheila Anderson and her 'Magical Music box'.

We once again used song sheets, but whilst all the

carols were on them, the order was not always easy to follow, being spread across 7 pages. Luckily someone usually found the right page and the rest of us quickly caught up.

Well done to all our singers. On a cold and frosty morning, with snow 'crisp and even' on the ground, even though the sun shone upon us. Much stamping of feet helped to keep from freezing to the spot.

A great time was had by all who sang, and stopped to listen.

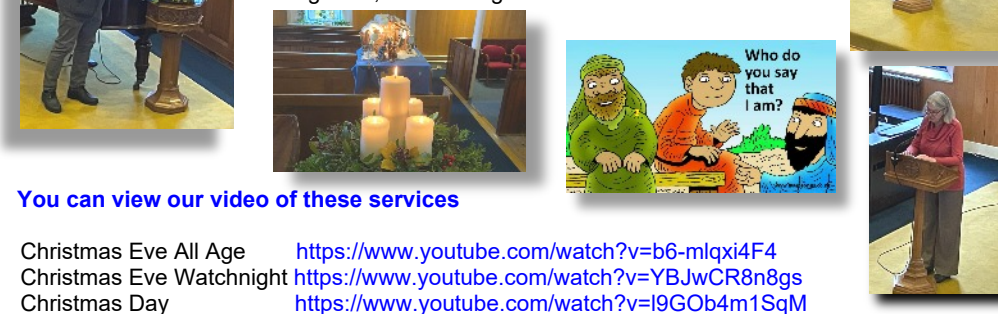


Watchnight Service

Visitors were welcomed from the cold evening with a hot drink from 11pm onward. Rev John Urquhart then opened the service at 11.30pm, Joan and Neil Cape led the bible readings, with Eileen Marchant on the piano leading our praise. The Christ candle was lit after the stroke of midnight, heralding the birth of the Messiah.

Christmas Day Family Service

The Christmas morning service was led by John, with Susan Wong leading the opening prayer, Vicky Nicholson the bible reading, and Joan Cape the Prayer for others. John's talk touched on Jesus' life, who people thought he was, and their decision to follow him. The Christ candle was again lit, announcing the birth of Jesus.



You can view our video of these services

Christmas Eve All Age <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6-mlqxi4F4>
Christmas Eve Watchnight <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBJwCR8n8gs>
Christmas Day <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9GOB4m1SqM>

Carols on the Green - December 11 Report by Caroline Toms

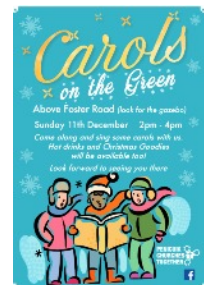
The Gazebo was erected and the hot drinks ready for the Carols on the Green event above Foster Road on the afternoon of Sunday December 11. This Churches Together activity drew families from all churches, and those just curious.

We sang carols from 2pm till 4pm and Andrew Dunsire played guitar with freezing hands (we don't know how he managed!) for a lot of them. In between, while Andrew warmed his hands, we were accompanied by music on a speaker.

Sheila Anderson brought her puppets which amused children

& adults and also served as brilliant hand warmers! Quite a few local people joined us singing & enjoying mulled wine, hot chocolate & mince pies.

A really joyful afternoon.



Christmas in the Town Hall - Report by Joan Cape

6 o'clock on December 9th - Sheila and the puppets nearly ready to go, Andrew Dunsire and Graham McDonald tuning up, along with the Silver Band ...and all wondering who might come along to our carol event in the Town Hall after a break of two years. A slow trickle turned into a steady stream, till we were joined by around 60 people of all ages, including a group from The Glebe.



Our theme was "What's important about Christmas?" Our puppet clearly thought we have no idea: our opening rendition of "We're all together again", complete with audience participation, did not go down well...he had come to sing carols. So, aided by the band, we obliged, and all joined in with O come all ye faithful and Ding dong merrily on high, with even those who couldn't read the words lustily joining in with the glo-o-o-o-ria bits! A guessing game with some parcels came next - presents being very important at Christmas time! But we agreed that Christmas isn't just about presents - or not the kind that come wrapped up in paper and fancy bows.

More carols led us into the Christmas story from Luke's gospel, with a short video The first Christmas Song to help explain it a bit more easily. Then Andrew and Graham led us in two more carols: with the first we had a special treat, as Katy Johnston came to the front and signed as we sang Away in a manger - something very beautiful to watch.



Neil then showed us another video clip of the shepherds hearing the good news: but, wait a minute! It wasn't quite right - surely there were no cars, and certainly not flying ones, in the Bible. Our next reading quickly put that right! And if we still had any doubts, the words of While shepherds watched their flocks by night and Angels from the realms of glory soon got us

sorted out. The wise men then arrived - but their motor bikes didn't seem quite right either - so back to the Bible. Contrary to what most of us thought, there's no mention of camels (to the indignation of our camel puppet), but we agreed they were more likely than the motor bikes!



At this point a very grumpy puppet popped up to remind me that there was still one parcel to open: it was found to contain a Christingle. And through this, the meaning of Christmas became clear: the orange and the sweets on sticks represent the world and all the good things that God has given to us, to use and to look after, in whichever of the four corners of the earth we may live. Have you ever thought that he gave us, the people, to each other so that we would care for each other: some smiles were exchanged as we looked at our neighbours, thinking of them (perhaps for the first time) as God's gifts to us. The candle, of course is God's greatest gift, his son Jesus, to be our light in this dark world, showing us how we can change from being greedy and selfish to being generous, loving and caring. And the red ribbon - that's the love of Jesus, given to the whole world; the bit of the story that we call Easter. And that love, and all it means for us, is the best present anyone could have given us.

We finished with a short film, Loved this Christmas, a short prayer, and a final carol Joy to the World, before everyone left, taking with them what was needed to make a Christingle, and a book.

If you want to see what we looked at, click on these links:

<https://gochattervideos.com/downloads/the-first-christmas-song/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJzQyLa6O6o> (shepherds)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUGfJbY64Y4> (wise men)
<https://gochattervideos.com/downloads/loved-this-christmas/>

Messy Church Returns - Sunday 29 January 3.30pm to 5.30pm

Messy Church is a way of being church for families and others. It is Christ-centred, for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration.

