



Meldrum & Bourtie

Parish Church of Scotland

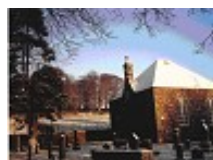
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Kirk News

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Dear Friends,

Hello! I am sure we are all tired of the phase 'A New Normal,' but here we are in front of a Holiday season that will be different in many ways. So much of what makes this time of year special for us will be vastly different from the traditions that have shaped and moulded us for years. I also write this letter as my first, finally in post as the new minister of Meldrum and Bourtie Parish Church! An arrival and start delayed by the impacts of Covid-19 on our life. I am so excited to be here with you in this community of Oldmeldrum and Bourtie and wish more than anything that this Christmas could be a joyous, carol singing, candle lighting, nativity playing, mince pie and mulled wine sharing season. But, alas, we live in a 'New Normal.' We are limited by the number of people we can see and where we can see them. We are limited to where we can sing and how we can play and so much more. Yet, this Christmas we are not limited from welcoming the Christ child into our homes. He does not count as a number of six. He is with us, even in our new ways of celebrating.

The season of advent is all about hope in waiting, the story of a messy stable in a time of uncertain political power. It is a story of accepting an extraordinary call, of believing the difficult in a time of difficulties, of travelling to new lands and the welcoming of the other.


We are all living in the messy, uncertain, difficult time of waiting right now, waiting in hope. Waiting for a vaccine, waiting to see and hug loved ones, waiting for business to return to normal, waiting for life to return to normal. This Christmas I hope we can all see that star of hope shining brightly, even in the dark night sky, telling us again, especially now that the darkness will not overcome. Love is born again, born in this messy, difficult, complicated time of ours, born for each of us.

As I write this my first letter, I am keenly aware it will be a while till my next. I will be going on Maternity Leave in January until August as we welcome our own little surprise into the world. Yet,

even in my time off I hope to be seen and see many, to dig our roots deeply into this community. So please say 'Hi' to me, tell me your name, again and again (masks do not help in getting to know names and faces!) So from our family to yours - We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, Neal, Alisa, Archie, Finley and Bump!

With all grace and hope and love,
Rev. Alisa McDonald



Contacts			
Name	Position		
Alisa McDonald	Minister		
Mrs Jean Mitchell	Reader		
Mr W Dalzell	Session Clerk & Roll Keeper		
Mr W Paterson	Treasurer		
Mrs Lorna Reid	Roll Keeper		
Focus Groups:			
Pat Patrone	Worship Group		
Kirk News			
Brian Reid	Editorial Rep		
Church Group:			
Eileen Oliver	Pastoral Care Visiting Team		
Facebook Page	www.facebook.com/meldrumbourtiechurch.org.uk		
Website	www.meldrumbourtiechurch.com		

ADVENT BAGS

As most of you will know all the primary school kids at Meldrum were gifted an Advent Bag, full of crafts, candles, activities and devotions for the advent and Christmas season. We hope you enjoy these bags and they bring joy and colour into your Advent Season. If you would like any of the materials, including Do Not be Afraid Family Devotional, Do Not be Afraid individual Colour book and Devotional, Angel on the Shelf, Epiphany Star, Colour in Pop-up Nativity, or Jesse Tree colouring ornaments please get in touch with Alisa McDonald at Alisa.McDonald@churchofscotland.org.uk



Attention all Knitters

For many years knitters in Oldmeldrum and beyond responded to the appeal for fish and chip vests for babies in Malawi. Newborn babies were being called 'Fish and Chip Babies' because many were sent home from hospital wrapped in newspaper for warmth. We now have a new contact for sending knitting to Malawi. As well as the little vests (which are knitted in one piece following a quick and easy pattern) the charity is desperate for any knitted items for young children and for baby blankets. If you would like a copy of the pattern for the vests please phone Sheila Simpson. Winnie Moir or Sheila will accept any completed items or they can be dropped off at church.

Letter of Thanks

In a year when many things have taken us by surprise, one of the unfortunate surprises in my life was having to step down as Interim Moderator at Meldrum and Bourtie during the summer due to personal circumstances.

It was very disappointing having to step away after being with the congregation for over a year, and helping the Nominating Committee negotiate the process to the point of choosing a sole nominee in Alisa. I was delighted that Euan Glen, as the new Interim Moderator, was able to find a way through the Covid situation which allowed Alisa to preach successfully for the charge and subsequently relocate to the north east with her family.

I was impressed with the folk I met at Meldrum and Bourtie – a hard working, capable, good humoured and committed bunch of people and I am sure that Alisa will be blessed in her time with you as your minister. My thanks to Eileen Oliver for her diligent and thorough work as secretary to the Nominating Committee and the Nominating Committee members for their excellent work; to the Kirk Session for keeping things ticking over nicely during the vacancy; to Matthew Rodger and Val Mitchell for the spells as locum and Jean Mitchell for her ongoing work as reader; to Euan for taking over as IM, but most especially to Billy, your Session Clerk, whose gift for organisation more than compensated for my deficiencies in that area and made the rather daunting prospect of overseeing two charges for a year much less difficult than it could have been!

It's a small world, and once this 'thing' is over, I look forward to seeing some of you again in person as we never got a proper chance to farewell each other. In the meantime, may God continue to bless you and Alisa in this new phase of your shared ministry together.

Every blessing, Paul McKeown

Scoutpost 2020 cancelled

Sadly we have had to cancel our Christmas Card delivery service this year due to Covid restrictions.

Scoutpost is one of many fundraisers that has had to be cancelled this year, so we are particularly grateful to those Co-op members who nominated us as their charity and raised over £2000. This will help us purchase a small marquee which we can hire out (once we are all allowed to gather again) to help us be more financially self sufficient. I am particularly proud of our amazing Leaders and young people who have kept Scouting going throughout lockdown with virtual meetings and activities and to over 100 of our group who joined in the biggest virtual scout camp in the world with nearly 100,000 other Scouts in 78 countries taking part!

Since September we have resumed face to face scouting but restricted to outdoor activities.

We look forward to a safe return to indoor meetings and camps at some point next year.

Michael Pickford

Group Scout Leader

1st Daviot Oldmeldrum & 1st Pitcaple Scout Groups

Kirk News Articles

All items for the February / March 2021 issue of Kirk News should be in the hands of the Editors, Brian Reid, or Simon Hill by Sunday, 24th January 2021.

If you know of anyone who does not normally receive Kirk News and would like to, please contact the Editor. (see Contacts table)

This special Christmas issue is being delivered to all the Community and on behalf of the Kirk Session may we wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas.

Deaths

Mrs Ethel Manson Auchtercrag Care Home, Ellon
21st October 2020

Mr Alexander (Akki) Manson Kempswood, Oldmeldrum
17th November 2020



THANK YOU

I think many of us will gladly see the back of 2020, it has been a trying year, to say the least.

But throughout all the ups and downs we have faced this year, it has been great to see how you all have come together to help those in our Parish who found themselves isolated, housebound and alone due to Covid-19.

As is the way of the church we quietly continued to help local groups and individuals throughout the Parish in whatever way it was needed. I have received many messages of thanks for the help we have been able to provide, for keeping everything going getting the church opened and services restarted. This has been achieved with a fantastic team effort, all that has been done would not have been possible without the support of our Elders and you our members.

A special thank you to Dot and her delivery team (with some Elders drafted in to help) who have ensured all issues, bar one, of the Kirk News has been delivered despite the obstacles put before them. This issue will be distributed to every household in our town, another fantastic effort, thank you.

Our Pastoral Care team and Flower committee have been some of the most active teams this year keeping in touch with those who have suffered ill health, lost a family member or close friend, or just needed someone to chat to, thank you for all your efforts I know it has not been easy but you have all shown a genuine commitment to your role. Finally, I would like to thank those of you who helped prepare the church for reopening and Isobel along with our welcome teams that keep the church clean before and after our services each week, without which we could not open. We were fortunate that we had people with the time and expertise to ensure all that was demanded of us to prove the church could be opened safely were within our membership and to these, I give my ever grateful thanks.

I look forward to seeing you at our services leading up to Christmas, details and booking instructions can be found in this issue, and to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and a successful New Year.

William Dalzell, Session Clerk

Christmas 2020

Services and Activities:

Sunday 29 November

1st Sunday in Advent: Meldrum @ 11am

Sunday 6 December

2nd Sunday in Advent: Meldrum @ 11am

Sunday 13 December

3rd Sunday in Advent: Meldrum @ 11am

Sunday 20 December

4th Sunday in Advent: Meldrum @ 11am

Tuesday 22 December

Christmas afternoon service: Meldrum @ 2 pm
(retiring collection)

Wednesday 23 December

Christmas family service: Meldrum @ 6 pm
(retiring collection)

Thursday 24 December – Christmas Eve:

- ♦ **Family service @ 2 pm.**
(retiring collection)
- ♦ **Christmas Eve service @ 7 pm**
(retiring collection)

Retiring Collections:

Donations received from retiring collections at our Christmas services will be donated equally between the Children's Society and Christian Aid

Christmas 2020
Services and Activities:

**Advent Bible Study Tuesday evenings
@ 7pm via Zoom —Starting 1 Dec:**

More info? Email or call Alisa or Billy

**Visit our 'Lessons and
Carols' walk
just outside the church**

Nativity Hunt
**Hunt around the town to
find our knitted Nativity**

**Check out our Facebook
page each day throughout
Advent**



***To book a seat for any
of our Christmas
services please go to:***



www.meldrumandbourtiechurch.com/bookingform

PRAYER CALENDAR

December 2020



A lovely Harvest Prayer poem specially written for us and read earlier in church by our teenage church family member Joe.

The harvest festival is a special time,
great thanks to God for the good and divine.
Some difficult months have passed already,
a sad time with the loss of far too many.
Hold on to your loved ones for round the corner,
is joy and happiness and covid no-longer.
With more months to come don't reach dismay,
because Jesus will guide us in his own way.
Please remember that anything is possible,
with Jesus beside us the deepest river is crossable.
God bless us all, please never give in, so stay safe,
be brave and we will win !



JOY TO THE WORLD

PRAYER CALENDAR

December 2020



HOPE, PEACE, JOY and **LOVE** are the themes of the four candles that we light in Advent to prepare for the birth of the Christ child, God's great gift to us.

WEEK 1

Pray for all children's charities at home and abroad who work to bring **HOPE** to sad, troubled and stressed children. Remember the children in Africa including Malawi and those in Asia who need food, medicine and clean water.

WEEK 2

Pray for the children in Yemen and Syria and all war torn places that **PEACE** will come soon. Pray for their safety and remember all those working to keep them safe. Pray for those who are working for peaceful resolution and reconciliation.

WEEK 3

Pray for the wellbeing of all children and young people who bring such **JOY** to us all as we see them grow. Give thanks for the **JOY** they bring. Remember the parents, teachers and all who nurture and support young people.

WEEK 4

Pray for the flourishing of **LOVE** in our world. Give thanks for all acts of **LOVE** and kindness. Across each continent and in our own local communities we ask that **LOVE** grows to match the **LOVE** that God has shown to us in abundance through the birth, life, teaching and grace of our Lord Jesus our saviour.

PRAYER CALENDAR

January 2021



A New Year Prayer

Thank you Lord for giving me the brand new year ahead.
Help me to live the way I should as each new day I tread.
Give me gentle wisdom that I may help a friend,
Give me strength and courage so a shoulder I may lend.
The year ahead is empty help me fill it with good things.
Amen.

WEEKS 1 and 2

A Prayer for Epiphany which celebrates the visit of the Three Wise Men, it asks for help in guiding our way ahead just as the star guided the Wise Men.

God of abundant Gifts

show us where you want us to pour out our gifts,
When we see the darkness and fear it is too great,
Fix our eyes on your light.
Help us to walk in the way of the Magi,
Following the star to the places
Where you are breaking into our broken world.

Amen.

WEEKS 3 and 4

A Prayer for Christian Unity.

We pray for unity with Christians from other traditions in our joint task of sharing the love of Jesus in our world.

Lord Jesus who prayed that we might all be one,
we pray to you for the unity of all Christians.
Reveal your love in all our lives that we may begin to share our faith and love of you rather than keeping it hidden.
May others come to know you, follow you and begin to live life to the full. In Christ 's name we pray, Amen.

The Guild



This year has been like no other, but time still seems to have passed quite quickly and we are in December already.

The Guild takes this opportunity to wish all members/ friends a happy Christmas. Our village deserves a pat on the back for the way everyone, young and old, have rallied round and contributed in some way - helping those who needed it; abiding by the rules/restrictions. However things are looking up. We have welcomed a new Minister, Alisa, and managed to have church services with limited numbers. Now with reports of a vaccine on the way (even if it will take some time) I'm sure our patience will be rewarded and we will be able to look back at 2020 as the year we came through the coronavirus pandemic. Hopefully it will not be too long until the Guild can meet together, for Easter perhaps, when members and friends alike will be welcome.

Once again happy Christmas to everyone. Lets look forward to a healthy 2021, with normality edging ever closer and lots of permitted hugs everywhere.

Bereavement Service Update.

November is a month for memories and remembrance. At Meldrum and Bourtie Church we usually invite people to an annual Bereavement Service at this time of year. This takes the form of a short service of remembrance followed by tea and coffee. Many folks have found it helpful and we are sorry that it has not been possible to hold such a service this year as our Church Hall is not yet open due to covid restrictions.

We are thinking of you and assure you that we will be in contact again in 2021, when we hope to hold the next service.

Neither time nor distance
can erase what love has written
on our hearts and minds
Memories are the treasures of the soul

We are here to help and serve all in our community in this time of uncertainty:

Whatever your need, then please call any of the people whose contact details are listed. Between us, we will do what we can to help:

Elizabeth
Buchan

Elaine
Buck

William
Dalzell

Anne
McLean

Valerie
Mitchell

Eileen
Oliver

Pat
Patrone

Sheila
Simpson

Graham
Smith

Mhari
Watt

[NHS – Covid-19](#)

[Kirk Services - online](#)

All that we plan to do will be subject to any further measures announced by the Government.

Worshipping together again:

- * If you are experiencing any symptoms of Covid-19 or have been in contact with anyone experiencing these symptoms please do not come to church
- * Please arrive in good time as there may be queuing both inside and outside the building
- * Please enter through the front door
- * As you approach the building you will notice tape on the path to show social distance markings. Please use these markings to help you enter the building in a socially distanced manner
- * There are hand sanitiser stations located at the front entrance and at the rear exit door. Please use the hand sanitiser before entering the sanctuary
- * In accordance with Test and Protect, Scotland's approach to preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the community, we are required to take the contact details of the lead member of every household who attends church
- * The Scottish Government has advised the wearing of face coverings in churches is now mandatory. Masks will be available at the door if required
- * At this time, we will not be allowed to sing hymns (although we will be playing music)
- * We will try and ensure you and your household will be allocated seats together
- * A member of the Welcome Team will take you to your seat
- * There will be no tea or coffee served. If you need water, please bring your own
- * All Bibles and paper materials have been removed and all Bible readings will be on the screen. You are welcome to bring your own Bible
- * We encourage you to give your offering electronically at this time. If that is not possible the Collection Plates will be situated in the vestibule and at the rear door
- * In the event of a fire, please leave the building as quickly as possible. It will not be necessary to maintain the 2m distance in this instance

All of these measures will be reviewed every few weeks and we will lift restrictions in-line with Government guidelines.



**Worshipping together again:
Booking Form.**

Full name:

.....

Email address:

.....

Telephone number:

.....

Preferred method of contact:

Email:

Telephone:

Please enter the date of the service you wish to attend:

.....

Number in your household group (including yourself):

.....

I acknowledge that I am the lead contact for my household group and consent to my contact information being sent to NHS Test and Protect in the event of a suspected Covid-19 case within the church building.

Yes:

No: