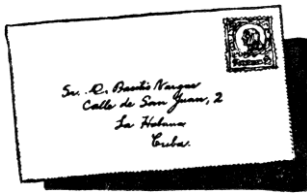


# BALERNO PARISH CHURCH BULLETIN

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2017



## LETTER FROM THE MANSE:

25<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Dear congregation

I have very much enjoyed the “Meet the Minister” events where I met so many people on a personal one to one basis. I loved to blether to each one who came. Thanks for your presence and to all who worked so hard to make it possible.

I am looking forward to Christmas and everything that comes with the celebrations. At this time of year I think quite a lot about all the different Christmas services and the message God wants me to proclaim. The one thing that is so clear to me is the fact that Christmas gives us all such a big opportunity to convey the TRUE message of Jesus’ coming to the world to everyone. It is a time where people is looking for joy, love and hope. It is a time where they WANT to believe in a God of mercy and love, a God who changed their lives too. And you and I are the messengers of this important task. We are the first contact for everyone who is interested in God and His message of LOVE, JUSTICE, MERCY, HOPE, PEACE AND LOVE.

Matthew 10:16-20 says it all. We have to be witnesses of our salvation and redemption in and through Jesus Christ.

So if you think a minute about yourself, how would you rate your “witness” performance? Or think differently, what would someone else rate your “witnessing performance”.

Just think about that for a moment. If we as Christians also had a “customer feedback service” whereby other people are asked about our dealings with them, what would they say?

Jesus is telling us in His Word that He wants us to be witnesses of His love. He wants you and me to represent Him on earth because that is what witnesses do. We must be “truthful” witness of what He has done for you and me. If we treat other people badly, then they will necessarily think badly of the church of Jesus Christ. If we as a congregation treat the people of our Parish badly and unkindly, then they will make the same connection.

No wonder the humanist society is flourishing and making every attempt to catch us out.

I do not think we can ever underestimate our “performance” as Christians in the world. We cannot underestimate the value that we as believers bring to this community in

Balerno. But then we must act out our faith, hope and love everywhere we go. Sometimes we can be our own worst enemies - when someone says something bad about an elder or the minister or stories that they heard, we do not stop them or direct the conversation in another loving Christ-like way.

We must be sure that we will be tested daily, but we do not have to worry too much of **what** we will say. God will through His Holy Spirit guide and help us.

So let us all try to be good living witnesses of God's constant care and love this Christmas. Let us go out in the wintry weather and perform good deeds so that everyone that we meet can praise God!

May all of you have a blessed Christmas!



Rev Dr André J Groenewald

**Welcome** We are hoping to re-launch The Bridge in the New Year! Not so very different from the original, just a more modern look. Much of what goes into it will depend on YOU, the congregation! The editorial team can only do so much – we can't write the whole thing (well, we could, but we are sure that some of you would also like to offer

opinions, views, ideas...) We have a new email address, it is [bpc-thebridge@balernochurch.org.uk](mailto:bpc-thebridge@balernochurch.org.uk) And items for publication can also be left at the church office. Subject to space and to editorial discretion we will publish whatever you send.

### **View from the pew**

At the service on August 27<sup>th</sup> our minister André welcomed Malcolm Ogilvie and Scott Simpson as Joint Deputy Session Clerks with a blessing. The theme of the sermon was the image of a body working together as a whole to function efficiently – we are made wonderfully well, and each of us is given faith, hope and love, along with a small part to play and with no-one being more important than the other.

The following week on 3<sup>rd</sup> September our newly-restored church windows (made possible by a gift from a generous donor) were dedicated. The sermon centred on the story from 2 Chronicles about the dedication of King Solomon's temple. Such a celebration, with smoke from many sacrifices, trumpets sounding, noise from the people as they bowed down and worshiped God! But alas, eventually the temple was destroyed and the people were in exile ... God indeed was mightier than the temple.

On 10<sup>th</sup> September the theme of resolving conflict by listening,

involving others and remembering not to exclude God from anything stemmed from Jesus' instruction to the Disciples to advise followers themselves, rather than going to the self-important Rabbis. Conflict, Jesus told them, could be resolved by talking to each other and remembering that with God, nothing is impossible.

Forgiveness was at the centre of the sermon on 17<sup>th</sup> September, with the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers for their treachery. It is God's prerogative to condemn, not ours ... He gave us His Holy Spirit in the power of forgiveness and Jesus himself showed us God's true power.

Valuing the sound of silence was the message on 24<sup>th</sup> September, for true communication with God - we need to be fully involved ... in starting a prayer with silence, we are listening to God, who in turn is listening to every heartbeat. Anger is corrosive ... don't let it eat away at relationships.

The church was beautifully decorated for Harvest Festival on 1<sup>st</sup> October. Farming was very different in Jesus' day, and much harder – Jesus was speaking to peasant farmers in their own language and idiom, having come to speak for God and we in turn have to spread His Holy Word, allowing Him to work through us. The same theme featured at the afternoon service. If you are reading this and don't always manage to get

to church for 10 am every week, do consider coming along to the monthly afternoon service. If you have difficulty getting out, transport is available. And tea and biscuits (and often cake...!) are served afterwards.

Gifts from the Harvest service were distributed around the parish and a large number of items were also given to the **Food Bank** at Holy Trinity Wester Hailes, who were very grateful for the donation.

Sunday evening 1<sup>st</sup> October saw the welcome return of Evenspace, with André leading a short communion service. Again, if you can't always manage on Sunday mornings, Evenspace is a lovely time of peace together.

André's Reformation theme on 8<sup>th</sup> October reminded us that Martin Luther brought a new understanding to the Church ... the Word of God became accessible to all with a movement to tell everyone. And the Church must keep asking, *'Are we still listening? Or are we standing still, and becoming stagnant?'* We must serve God, not the temple, for God is always there, always bigger than us. And a Church without change does not reflect the Word of God.

Another Sunday, another Festival! This time it was our Festival of Praise on 15<sup>th</sup> October, marking the final day of the 10<sup>th</sup> Balerno Music Festival. We were joined by Ade Smith and Debbie

McConnell and members of the Folk Club and the theme was Weddings. Cana was a small town near Nazareth, and its only claim to fame was that Jesus attended a wedding there, along with his mother and disciples, and saved the day by turning water into wine. He did this although his responsibility was to God, not to anyone else – and it was the first miracle, or sign, which reinforced his disciples' belief in Him. God can and will do anything – so how can we not glorify Him and believe? He will be there when everything is dark and broken around us if we just pray. He has a purpose for us – to live according to His word and to glorify Him.

## CONGREGATION NEWS

Gary Dunbar and his daughter Elise were baptised on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

William MacDonald Haycox died on 12<sup>th</sup> September and his funeral was 20<sup>th</sup> September.

## CHRISTIAN AID



Thank you to everyone for supporting this year's Christian Aid Week. Those people who contributed by going house-to-house raised £3,078.58 plus £160 in envelopes given in at the Post Office and £143 was in those envelopes

handed in during church services. Ink recycling raised £178.40 this year and many thanks to Allan Woodburn who organises this. On which note, contributions of unwanted ink cartridges in the appropriately labelled grey in St Joseph's Hall, always welcome.

Balerno Parish Church and those members of the congregation at St Joseph's RC as was, who work with us in the Parish, will be involved in raising money in Balerno during next year's Christian Aid Week (13th-19th May), however we are unlikely to be including a house-to-house collection. It not being something I want to do myself next year, I'm not prepared to ask others to. What I am happy to do is the administration, should anyone else feel strongly enough that a house-to-house collection should continue to be the focus of our Christian Aid Week activities. Get in touch if so. In the meantime, have a look at Christian Aid's programmes, campaigns and resources and get as involved as you feel led to be. For more information, there is a dusty magazine in St Joseph's Hall or the more comprehensive website:

[www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

Thank you again for your support.

*Rowena Stewart*

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## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING:

The **10th Balerno Music Festival** ran from 27<sup>th</sup> September-15<sup>th</sup> October and as usual was a huge success. Folk, Rock, Chamber music, Strathspeys and Reels, Childrens' concerts, Big Band, Songs from Musicals ... it was all there, with concerts every night and music to be enjoyed daily at the Mill, winding up with the always popular Jazz Party with the Roger Cull Quartet. Huge thanks to all who participated, we'll hopefully see you again next year!

**Mission & Outreach** held a collection of household goods for **Fresh Start**, who were delighted with our donation. On their Facebook page they showed a photo and said *'As you can see from the jam packed van here, Balerno Parish Church had another fabulous collection of Starter Pack items for Fresh Start. Thank you to everyone who donated goods and the brilliant volunteers who took the time to organise and box up all the donations.'* There will be a collection of toiletries for distribution by Fresh Start during November. Watch for a big box in St Joseph's!

## Christmas Fair 2017

25<sup>th</sup> November 2017 is a date for your diary! That's the day when Santa comes to Balerno : the day when there are crafts to buy ; when there

are tins to win and cakes whose weight must be guessed. You've guessed it - 25<sup>th</sup> November is the date of the Christmas Fair which will be open on the church campus from 10.00 am until 13.00 pm. Entry will be free and there will be lots to do and to buy for children and adults alike.  
*George Burt*

**THE LABYRINTH.** Walking a Labyrinth can be a profound spiritual experience. Walking in silence or accompanied by soft music, in sunshine or by candle-light, alone or alongside others, it can act as an aid to prayer or a form of meditation. Historically, labyrinths have been used world-wide since ancient times and by many diverse cultures. For us as Christians, it can represent our journey through life and into faith, or from anger to peace, from despair to hope ... or whatever we are needing at that moment. Join us, then, walking the Labyrinth Sunday, 10th December, (5-9pm), Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 11th, 12th & 13th December (11am – 12noon & 7 – 9pm).



## CHURCH FLOWERS

Flowers were given in  
November/December by

05 Nov Mr. M.Beattie

12 Nov Mrs. M. Black

19 Nov Mr. G. Burt

26 Nov Mrs. M. Milne

02 Dec Mrs. M. Goodbrand

From then on Church is decorated for  
Christmas.

And a Harvest message from the  
Flower Committee: 'A big thank you  
to all who gave gifts for our Harvest  
Service and to those who came and  
distributed them round the village.  
The people who receive them  
appreciate being remembered. This  
year we have given out 316 bunches  
of flowers. Thank you to all the ladies  
who make this possible by either  
Arranging, Recording, Distributing  
and not forgetting the 46 people who  
generously give money to buy the  
flowers.

I would personally like to thank my  
Flower Committee for their Support  
and time given to make our Church  
look beautiful all the year round. *Rita  
Poulter*

Bill and Margaret Black invite you  
to their annual Christmas sale in  
favour of the British Heart  
Foundation on **Tuesday 14th  
November** at 11 Larchfield  
Balerno - from 9.30am - 9pm.  
Everyone is welcome!

## What's On in the Church Calendar November and December 2017

### NOVEMBER

Wed, 1<sup>st</sup> Guild, 7.30pm '*The History  
of Balerno Parish Church*'  
Lesley Burt

Thurs, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gardeners' Question  
Time, 7.30pm

Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> Breakfast Communion,  
9am. Traditional  
Communion, 10am  
Afternoon Communion  
followed by refreshments,  
2.30pm

Mon, 6<sup>th</sup> Monday Club, 2pm '*An  
Afternoon With  
Sainsbury's*'

Sat, 11<sup>th</sup> Farmers Market Coffee  
Morning, 10am

Sun, 12<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday,  
10am  
Evenspace 7.30pm

Tues, 14<sup>th</sup> Fellowship Committee  
Meeting, 7.30pm

Wed, 15<sup>th</sup> Guild, 7.30pm

Sat, 18<sup>th</sup> Christmas Card Sorting  
9.30am

Sun, 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship, 10am  
Guild week

Mon, 20<sup>th</sup> Monday Club, 2.00pm  
'*Mary's Meals*' Ishbel  
Smith  
Finance Cttee, 7.30pm

Wed, 22<sup>nd</sup> Dinner discussion:  
Gordon Wright

Sat, 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Fair @ 10am - 1pm  
 Sun, 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship, 10am  
 Bereavement Service, @ 3pm followed by refreshments  
 Afrikaans Service @ 4:30pm  
 Tues, 28<sup>th</sup> PALM, 2.30pm  
 Youth Group, 6.30pm  
 Wed, 29<sup>th</sup> Kirk Session Meeting

## DECEMBER

Fri, 1<sup>st</sup> Balerno Village Screen: *Baby Driver (15)*  
 Sat, 2<sup>nd</sup> Balerno Village Screen  
*Kubo & The Two Strings (PG)* *Dunkirk (12A)*  
 Sun, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Worship, 10 am  
**NO Afternoon Service**  
 Rotary Service, 4 pm in St Joseph's Hall.  
 Mon, 4<sup>th</sup> Monday Club Christmas Lunch  
 Scout service at 7:30 pm in church  
 Tues, 5<sup>th</sup> Housegroup Communion at 7:30pm  
 Wed, 6<sup>th</sup> Guild: *Fresh start*  
 Thurs, 7<sup>th</sup> Community Christmas lights @ 6:45pm  
 Sat/Sun 9/10<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Festival

Sun, 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship (Gift Service)  
 Sun/Mon/Tues Labyrinth  
 Wed, 13<sup>th</sup> Mill Christmas Party  
 Thurs, 14<sup>th</sup> Buggies & Bairns service 11am  
 Bible Study social in Manse @7 pm  
 Sun, 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship (Family Carol Service)  
 Afrikaans Service & Christmas meal @ 3:30pm  
 Tues, 19<sup>th</sup> PALM, 2.30pm  
 Wed, 20<sup>th</sup> Guild Christmas party @ 7:30  
 Sat, 23<sup>rd</sup> Balerno Village Screen: *'It's a Wonderful Life' (U)*  
 Sun, 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship, 10am  
 Family Service, 7pm  
 Hot chocolate and mince pies in St Joseph's @11 pm  
 Watchnight service @ 11:30  
 Mon, 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day family reflections by Ishbel Smith @ 10am in church  
 Sun, 31<sup>st</sup> Worship service @ 10am

There will be a collection of toiletries for distribution by Fresh Start in St Joseph's Hall during November.



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