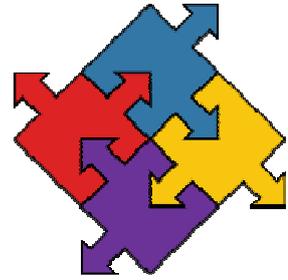


# The Net

The Magazine of Priestfield Parish Church, Edinburgh  
*Living in the Way of Jesus*



Web: <http://priestfield.org.uk>

Minister: Rev Dr Jared W Hay



## Jared's Christmas Napkin Scribbles

### ***Christmas and Revelation***

As we enter Advent, we come to the conclusion of our series of Sunday studies on the Book of Revelation. For me at least, the time has passed quickly and I have enjoyed sharing the things I learned during my Study Leave and since. It's also been fun thinking of things to show and wear that illustrate the message!

The themes of Advent and the end of Revelation overlap, because both speak of promise and hope, spoken of from different parts of the Christian Story. Revelation completes the Story of Christmas, for Jesus came as God's Messiah to reconcile the whole of creation to God. We are not ultimately destined for some 'ethereal heaven,' but for God's 'new heaven and new earth.'

So let us celebrate the coming of Christ this year, looking not only to Bethlehem but also to New Jerusalem. That will bring with it the challenge to be 'new creation' people now, as we follow Jesus and share his love and life with others.

### ***Life at Priestfield***

There are a number of important issues in process at the moment affecting the life of the congregation, and the Kirk Session is keen that everyone is kept up to date with information. A Congregational Meeting was held on 29 November to keep everyone as up-to-date as possible. The information is reprinted here in The Net so that those who were unable to be at the meeting are 'kept in the loop.'

Further updates will be given in due course.

### ***Congregational Conversations***

As you will already be aware, Reid Memorial, Craigmillar Park and Priestfield congregations have entered into talks with representatives from the Presbytery's Deployment of Resources Committee to discern a pattern of ministry in the area that make best use of scarce resources for the mission of the Church. A team of four from DRC has been assigned the task of speaking to each Kirk Session in turn, and then they will bring together representatives of each congregation to take the discussions further and see what emerges.

Priestfield Kirk Session met with the team on 18 November. We asked if they were approaching the discussion with any particular outcome in mind, and we were assured that they were not. They also indicated that at this stage there was no change to the Presbytery Plan for the area in terms of the number of full-time posts. There followed a discussion in which we were invited to articulate the various activities in which we are engaged, and it was amazing hearing how much is happening. But we also articulated the strain on our resources of people, time and money in developing our mission in Newington.

When, at a previous meeting, the Kirk Session discussed possible scenarios (such as status quo, a Maxi-Parish or union), no preferred scenario emerged. However, it was agreed that in the long term the status quo would be unsustainable, so the conversations are being engaged in with that in mind. More details will be given as things progress, and in due course the whole congregation will have the opportunity to discuss and give its verdict on whatever proposals the visiting team put together.

### ***Exploring the Reordering of the Sanctuary –pews and chairs***

The Kirk Session received a report from the Furnishings Group that the pew cushions are in need of renewal and that this would cost several thousand pounds. In response, Session set up an ad hoc group to explore the possible replacement of our pews with chairs: what the cost and other practical implications of that change would bring; what the benefits would be. Presbytery has approved this exploration.

There are several elements to this process. The **Priestfield** element

is that the ad hoc group will present a report and recommendation to the Kirk Session when its exploration is complete. The Kirk Session will then discuss the report and make a recommendation to the congregation for the whole church to speak its mind on the matter.

There is a **Presbytery** element. Although we have received permission to explore, we would also have to put any final plan to the Presbytery Property Committee for approval.

Because we are 'A' listed, there is a '**121**' element, which involves the General Assembly's Committee on Church Art and Architecture (CARTA). CARTA liaises with Historic Scotland.

The good news is that all the relevant permission-giving bodies (ecclesiastical and civil) have been contacted and all are so far happy with the way in which we are going about the exploration. They are also happy with the present outline proposal, which would be to move the organ to the north side of the church, adapt the wheelchair ramp, cover the organ pit, cover the redundant heating grills and carpet the whole floor. The Fabric Group is investigating the other implications of this plan, such as the electrical supply to the church.

The ad hoc group also had a meeting with a representative from Alpha Furnishing, and a good discussion was had. In the light of that discussion it was agreed that there was a preference for metal rather than wooden chairs. We have been supplied with four different types of metal chair to test. If we decided to pursue the reordering, CARTA would have to give its approval to the kind of chair and the colour.

The next meeting of the ad hoc group is in January by which time we hope to have more details about the practical implications for the electrical supply and the like.

Some of this work will be done by ourselves, but most would require skilled tradesmen. This is not simply an exploration of removing pews and inserting chairs, but a consequent reordering of the sanctuary, all with a view to making the space available for a range of activities that will help us carry forward our mission.

### ***Hall Kitchen***

Earlier this year we engaged in Phase 1 of a two-phase refurbishment of the Hall Kitchen under the title, 'Cooking for Mission.' While we did not receive some central funding we applied

for, the Presbytery has given us a grant of £2000 towards the £7000 costs of Phase 2, which is scheduled to take place as soon as possible. This is a much-needed updating of our kitchen facilities and it is already being put to good use. Completion will allow the Hall to be used for a wider variety of events.

### ***Church Rear Garden***

The rear garden of the church is both an opportunity and a threat! Presently, there are five very large trees, some of which are beginning to rot, some are doing damage to drains and all are creating difficulty for our neighbours both in terms of obscuring views and falling leaves. Telephone wires have also been brought down.

Both the Fabric Group and the Kirk Session are concerned at the problems the large trees are causing, but can also see that a more landscaped garden would be a real asset to both church and community. At the moment, there is no overall plan for development, but the first step needs to be the removal of trees that are doing damage, and permission for this is being sought – indeed, will be granted if we do not hear to the contrary by 1 December. While the Kirk Session is concerned about the damage and nuisance caused by the trees, it is also conscious of the positive place of trees in the local environment. The Session has asked for a specialist report on the condition of the trees, with recommendations and costs of addressing the problems, before it proceeds. The Fabric Group is seeking both the advice and tenders for this work, and it may be that we will need to undertake it incrementally. Those trees removed will be replaced by others appropriate to an urban garden. In the meantime, ideas for an overall plan are invited, and a proposal will be put together in due course.

### ***Christmas Offerings***

This year our Christmas Offerings will be divided equally between Edinburgh Direct Aid, for their work in Syria, and the Bethany Night Shelter, which gives shelter to the homeless during the cold winter months. A representative from EDA will be with us on 13 December to give us more information of their work.

Jane joins me in sending Christmas greetings to all readers of The Net. Our hope is that, whatever your circumstances, you will be able to celebrate the birth of Christ with thanksgiving, and that you will

know his presence with you in 2016.

Christmas Blessings,

Jared.

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## WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?

### DECEMBER

Tuesday	1	7.30	The Guild:
Wednesday	2	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	3	7.30	The Forum 7 <i>Living in the Garden City - What is New Creation?</i>
Saturday	5	10.00	Café Time for Alzheimer Scotland. See <a href="http://www.alzscot.org/">http://www.alzscot.org/</a>
Sunday	6	10.30	All-age worship with an Advent theme <i>(including Communion)</i>
		4.00	'A Candle in Memory' <i>remembering those we miss at Christmas</i>
Tuesday	8	2.00	The Guild visits the Pantomime
Wednesday	9	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	10	7.00	Christmas Carols <i>come and sing carols together - traditional and modern</i>
Sunday	13	10.30	All-age worship with an Advent theme
Wednesday	16	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Sunday	20	10.30	All-age worship with an Advent theme
Thursday	24	4.30	Christmas Eve Family Service <i>come with the children to the noisy stable</i>
		11.15	Watchnight Service <i>with coffee and mince pies from 10.45 pm</i>
Friday	25	10.30	<b>Christmas Day Celebration</b>
Sunday	27	10.30	All-age worship

## JANUARY 2016

Sunday	3	10.30	<b>New Year Service</b> <i>(including Communion)</i>
Tuesday	5	7.30	The Guild
Wednesday	6	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	7	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	10	10.30	All-age worship
Wednesday	13	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Sunday	17	10.30	All-age worship
Tuesday	19	7.30	The Guild
Wednesday	20	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	21	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	24	10.30	All-age worship
Wednesday	27	7.00	'Knitting Together'
		7.30	Kirk Session
Saturday	30	4.00	Film Night for Messy Church families
Sunday	31	10.30	All-age worship



## FEBRUARY

Tuesday	2	7.30	The Guild
Wednesday	3	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	4	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Saturday	6	10.00	Café Time <i>for tearfund. See</i> <i><a href="http://www.tearfund.org">http://www.tearfund.org</a></i>
Sunday	7	10.30	All-age worship <i>(including</i> <i>Communion)</i>
Wednesday	10	7.30	Ash Wednesday Service
Sunday	14	10.30	All-age worship
Tuesday	16	7.30	The Guild
Wednesday	17	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Thursday	18	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	21	10.30	All-age worship
Wednesday	24	7.00	'Knitting Together'
Saturday	27	4.00	Messy Church
Sunday	28	10.30	All-age worship



**WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?**

# ~ SNIPPETS from the KIRK SESSION ~

1 October 2015

## Election of Presbytery Elder

As agreed, David Douglas was now serving as Presbytery elder for 2015/16. Elders would consider who might serve as elder for 2016/17.

## Supervised Placement

It was likely that Rev Amos Chewachong would be starting his placement at Priestfield in February 2016, although a precise date had not yet been finalised.

## Reaching Out in Faith and Friendship

The Christmas offering would be divided equally between Edinburgh Direct Aid (EDA) for helping Syrian refugees and Bethany for the winter shelter for the homeless.

## Internal Ministry

The Group proposed that a future morning service should include elements of Taize-style worship so that the wider congregation might benefit. Jared thought this could be included early in the New Year and would develop the idea.

## 'Cooking for Mission' the project to upgrade the upstairs kitchen

The Kirk Session;

1. noted that Presbytery's Fabric Loan Trust had awarded Priestfield £2,000 towards the project,
2. approved the completion of the refurbishment of the upstairs kitchen at an estimated cost of £7,000,
3. approved the funding of appropriate and limited ancillary works from the Fabric budget,
4. approved that the balance of funding should be from the 2015 Gift Day income or the 2016 General Fund as determined at the time by the Finance Group.

David Douglas confirmed that funds were available and cash-flow would not be problematic.

## Pews and Chairs

Jared updated the Session on recent progress;

- The Group had met with a representative from Alpha Furnishing to discuss options. See <http://www.alpha-furnishing.com/>
- The Group had met on site with Presbytery's Fabric Convener to discuss the proposals,

- Jared had made contact with the City of Edinburgh Council Planning, Historic Environment Scotland and Church of Scotland's Church Art and Architecture Committee (CARTA). The Kirk Session noted the progress being made.

### Fabric

The Fabric Group had noted that a number of trees were in poor condition and others caused problems to overhead telephone lines and underground drainage. The Kirk Session agreed that the City of Edinburgh Council be approached for permission to remove the trees. Depending on the response it is possible that the work would need to be phased over a number of years.

### Finance

Fiona Ferguson reported that the Treasurers had received 'thank you' letters from;

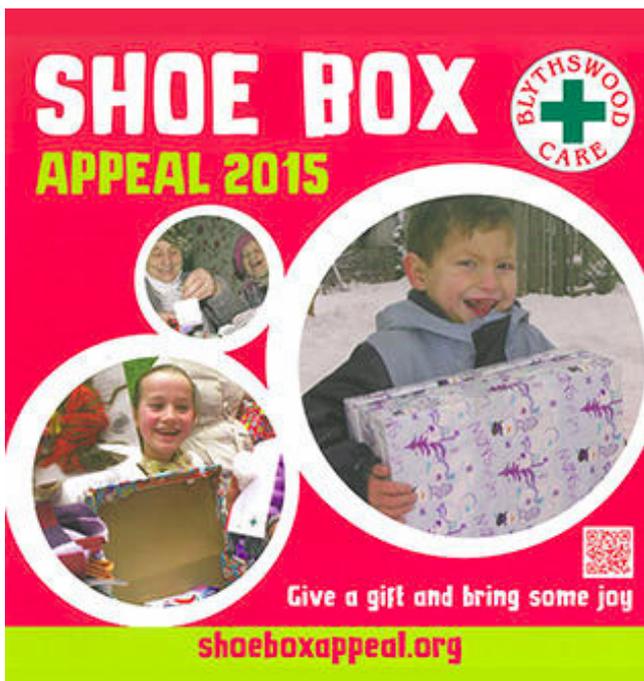
- Edinburgh City Mission for the harvest gift to Newington Basics Bank, and
- Friends International for the gift towards its local costs.

*24 November 2015*

Next meeting of the Kirk Session.

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## ~ Blythswood Care Shoe Box Appeal 2015 ~



Many thanks to everyone who filled a shoe box for the Blythswood Care Shoe Box Appeal 2015. We managed to fill **seventy** boxes again this year – a very good effort!

We finished checking the boxes at Craigmillar Park Church and I am grateful to all those who came along during the fortnight to help the Sorting Centre Co-ordinator, Norman Weibye, and his team with this task.

This year a total of **7,100** shoe boxes were checked, all of which will be delivered to needy children and family members in the Ukraine in time for Christmas. In addition, more than £12,000 has been raised in donations.

*Pat Smith*

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## *Prayer and Meditation ~*



### ***Born, growing and living in you***

**“LET IT BE TO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD”**

*Luke 1:38 NKJV*

The story of the virgin birth illustrates how close God wants to get to us. In a sense, He’s asking you the same question He asked Mary: ‘Are you willing to let Me in?’.

**Just as Mary conceived the Christ Child,  
Jesus can be born in you and live His life through you.**

What an amazing thought. What a privilege!

Paul prayed

‘...that Christ may dwell in your hearts...’  
*(Ephesians 3:17 NIV 2011 Edition).*

John said,

‘Those who obey...live in him, and he in them’  
*(1 John 3:24 NIV 1984 Edition).*

Jesus promised,

If anyone...opens the door, I will come in’  
*(Revelation 3:20 NIV 2011 Edition).*

**All God asks is an invitation and an open heart.**

God was with Adam in the garden. He was with Abraham and called him His friend. But, **as a redeemed child of God, Jesus is in you.** And He will keep growing in you until he comes out in your words, your attitudes, your lifestyle and the choices you make each day.

Are you struggling with bitterness? Or worry? Or unforgiveness? Or bad habits? Since Jesus lives in you, you have access to His

awesome power. That's why the Bible talks about 'striving according to His power, which mightily works within me' (*Colossians 1:29 NASB*).

**God isn't looking for great faith, He's looking for simple trust.**

Mary must have felt overwhelmed and inadequate when she realised what God had in mind for her. Nevertheless, she said, 'Let it be to me according to your word' (*Luke 1:38 NKJV*).

**Do you want to have a great Christmas?  
Make this your prayer too.**

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## THE GUILD "GO IN PEACE"

We start the session by thanking Mrs Pat Smith and Miss Mary McKendrick for their many years as Convener and Secretary respectively. Their commitment has ensured the continued success of the Guild. The new Convener is Mrs Shirley Kirk and Secretary Mrs Helen Douglas.

At the Annual Meeting of the Guild in the Caird Hall, Dundee, Kay Keith spoke passionately about the national and international service given by the Guild. From her past year as National Convener, Kay looked back at her journey to Canada and the keynote speakers discussion of the refugee crisis in Malta, Afghanistan and Malawi – showing the Guild's involvement in these key issues, often before the mainstream media brought it to a wider audience. Not just looking back, but forward, Guild members were encouraged to grow in faith and to grow in service.

A half day conference for office bearers was held at 121 George Street which Shirley and Helen attended. Guest speaker was Linda Young, National Convener, who told us about the Prayer Shawl Ministry which their group had started seven years ago but it is a worldwide movement of small groups who gather to create shawls, scarves and small squares for individuals who would benefit from this outreach of love and compassion. Often these are people burdened with illness or sorrow. The purpose is to provide a

garment that will allow these individuals to encounter God's love and presence in a tangible way – a feeling of comfort and warmth beyond what the woven threads alone would be able to provide.

The meeting closed with the Guild prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you  
For loving me right where I am  
Help me to know your love  
Deep in my heart and enable  
that love to flow from me  
to those with whom I am in contact.                      Amen.

Already this session we have had some very interesting and varied meetings, including an evening focused on our theme and on our discussion topic 'Working through conflict', a travel talk about back-packing in China and a flower arranging demonstration.

**Our Guild members would like to wish everyone  
a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.**

*Helen Douglas*

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**35<sup>th</sup> Braid Cub Scout Pack**



Cubs continue to enjoy a busy programme of activities. The Scout Association revamped our award scheme earlier this year and we are now all working towards the 'Our World' Challenge which covers a wide range of topics. As part of this, we visited the Edinburgh Central Mosque to find out a bit more about Islam. We also looked at different community services and visited Liberton Fire Station. Unfortunately the fire service had quite a busy evening and were called out three times during our time there, but everyone was still able to see round an appliance and learned something new about fire safety. Another important part of this award is looking at how to care for the environment. Cubs created bird feeders and took part in some junk modelling.

Weekly meetings continue to include different games, which are enjoyed by all. We also enjoyed a film evening and are looking forward to a sleepover in Penicuik at the end of November.

We have been pleased to welcome a number of new Cubs and continue to be supported by Explorer Scouts as part of the Young Leader scheme.

*Andrew, Laura and Dave*

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## 35<sup>th</sup> Braid Scout Group

Many thanks for the donations of Active Kids vouchers. Together with donations from parents we have been able to buy:

- A tent so that we can carry out light weight camping overnights. It recently had its first outing to Bonaly.
- Some airflow balls, which are useful for games in the hall.

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*Prayer and Meditation ~*



***The benefits of reading God's Word***

**“YOUR WORDS ... [ARE] MY JOY AND  
MY HEART'S DELIGHT.”**

*Jeremiah 15:16 NIV*

God promises certain things to those who take time each day to get to know Him through His Word. Let's look at some of them:

(1) **Joy** - “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty.”  
(*Jeremiah 15:16 NIV*)

(2) **Strength** - “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (*Acts 20:32 NIV*)

(3) **Peace** - “Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.” (*Psalms 119:165 NIV*). “If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river.” (*Isaiah 48:18 NIV*)

(4) **Stability** - “I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure.” (*Psalms 16:8-9 NIV*)

(5) **Success** - “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” (*Joshua 1:8 NIV*)

(6) **Answered prayer** - “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you.” (*John 15:7 NIV*)

Joy, strength, peace, stability, success, and answered prayer—these are the things everybody wants. Don't you? Well, look no further.

**God has promised them to you when you spend time with Him in His Word each day.**

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## CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2015

### Sundays in Advent

10.30 am All-age worship with Advent Themes -  
*Come and prepare for the coming of Jesus*

### Thursday 10 December

7.00 pm Christmas Carol Service

### Thursday 24 December

4.30 pm Christmas Eve Family Service  
*Come with the children to the noisy stable*

11.15 pm Watchnight Service  
*With coffee and mince pies from 10.45 pm*

### Friday 25 December

10.30 am Christmas Day Celebration  
*Bring a favourite present and tell us about it*

## Sunday 27 December

10.30 am All-age Worship  
*Continuing the Christmas theme*

## Sunday 3 January

10.30 am New Year Service  
*Come and ask God's blessing for 2016*

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## *Prayer and Meditation ~*



### **Remember to say thank you**

“GOD’S PEOPLE SHOULD BE BIGHEARTED AND COURTEOUS.”  
*Titus 3:2*

**Gratitude comes with a host of benefits.** It improves your heart rhythm, reduces stress, and helps you heal physically and think more clearly under pressure. It floods your body and brain with endorphins that strengthen and rejuvenate you. And like any muscle, the more you exercise it the stronger it grows. It doesn't have to be complicated; just take a walk and think about your blessings and it will set the tone for your day.

The psalmist said,

‘Praise the Lord and do not forget all his kindnesses.’

*Psalm 103:2 NCV*

**God’s blessings operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**

*Try this:*

When you sit down to eat, have everyone at the table name something they're thankful for. There's always something.

An elderly lady at a nursing home said, ‘I thank you, Lord, for two good teeth, one upper and one lower. And I thank you that they meet!’

Psychologist Martin Seligman suggests sending a letter or email of gratitude to somebody, then visiting that person and reading it to them. **People who say ‘thank you’ are measurably happier and less depressed.** The CEO of Campbell Soup wrote over sixteen

thousand thank-you notes to his employees, and energised the entire company in the process.

**Go ahead, encourage your friends and co-workers by letting them know you appreciate what they do.**

The Bible says, 'God's people should be bighearted and courteous.' One author observes: 'You have it in your power to increase the sum total of the world's happiness by giving a few words of sincere appreciation to someone who's lonely or discouraged. Perhaps you'll forget the kind words you say today, but the recipient may cherish them for a lifetime.'

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*Free issues of the daily devotional are available.*

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