

Dear Friends,

The other day I saw an advert on the television for a well known electrical retailer. I won't give you it's name but it's also the name of a popular Indian dish. I'm sure you've guessed. Anyway, the advert shows a family in which the parents fool the children about what they are getting for Christmas which then turns out to be a new television. In fact an 'HD TV LG OLED 4K Ready Television' - and I haven't a clue what most of that means. However, at the end of the advert the 'popular Indian meal' retailer colleague says, *'After all that's what Christmas is all about.'*

From what I could see it was mainly about televisions and if you go on to the web site the advert reads, 'Have a Merry Techmas', with no mention of the Christmas story at all; no stable. No Mary, Joseph or the baby Jesus. It seems that for this particular retailer the Advent of the Saviour of the world has become a story about buying a television or anything else that we can be persuaded to buy to make it a 'Merry Techmas.'

In contrast to the totally commercial image of that advert I saw a Christian poster that had in bold letters the eye-catching, 'Christmas Begins with Christ.' 'Christmas Begins with Christ'. I hope that folks seeing that sign will stop and think about the meaning of Christmas. Because the fact is that for many folks in our modern, secular world of commercial festive overkill Christmas does not begin with Christ. It begins with presents and food and parties, perhaps eating too much and drinking too much, and ends with an expanded waistline, perhaps a sore head and a, usually, a severely dented credit card, especially if it has been used to buy an, 'HD TV LG OLED 4K Ready Television'.



Interestingly Christmas is also the time of year when many folks long for the days when Christmas seemed to mean so much more than it does now. Of course, Christmas is a time for presents and for families and friends to spend time together but I think that most folks would agree that it has become too commercialised. However, I wonder if they also realise that amidst the presents and parties the most important part of Christmas has been left out - the Christ child.

The Gospels tell us that there was no room in the inn and so Jesus was born in a stable where his first crib was a manger filled with the animals' straw. Everyone was busy doing their own thing, the inn was full, perhaps the kitchen and dining room were going full blast, the servant rushing around the tables, amid the chatter and the laughter and the noise of hearty appetites being satisfied. What was one more peasant baby born into the world?

However, we are also told that some did come to wonder and worship; the shepherds and later the Wise Men from the east. People who were given a glimpse behind the ordinary things they saw in that stable. People who were given an insight beyond what their eyes could see, and their ears hear. People who felt something touch their hearts and stir their spirits so that they knew they were in the presence of something holy and wonderful.

There are still many folks for whom Christmas is empty of Christ; for whom it is a great holiday with nothing at all of the holy day about it! But thankfully for many, many folks it is still a holy day, a time for celebrating the birth of our Saviour. A time for looking beyond the hustle and bustle, the canned Christmas music, the tinsel, the glitter, the Santa Clauses and the presents to thrill



at the greatest gift of all. A time to feel our hearts touched with the wonder of God born on earth, our spirits moved by the Spirit of the God who came to show us his love in the flesh, and whose Spirit still comes to fan into wonder and love hearts open to his coming.

'Christmas begins with Christ', Hallelujah! Let us share that Good News with other folks, because, *'After all that's what Christmas is all about.'*

A Happy and Blessed Christmas to You All,  
 God Bless, Morris and Jan.



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## OUTREACH NATIVITY ISABEL MACLEOD

On Saturday 2nd December the Christmas lights were switched on in Fochabers Square and, as usual, the Village Association had an afternoon of festive fun arranged. As part of the action that afternoon, the local Churches joined together to bring a part of the Christmas story to the Community. The Outdoor Nativity saw all folks in the Square being asked to register for the Census at one of the Census Stations. The arrival of Mary and Joseph allowed people to see them being turned away from all the local hotels which were fully booked.

It was fantastic to have so many people from the village come to see the humble pair being given lodgings in a lowly stable and hear how the Christmas story began. Mary and Joseph were left waiting for the birth of the first child and the end of the story can be found out by coming along to one of the Christmas services in one of the local Churches.



Times of all services were distributed to people when they registered for the Census, and are noted below. There is a lot happening and everyone is very welcome to come along and be a part of the events.



### **Sunday 10 December 2017**

6.30pm - Spey Bay Public Hall – Carols with ‘Take Note’

### **Sunday 17 December 2017**

10.00am – Bellie Church – Family Christmas Worship

6.00pm – St Mary’s RC Church - Advent Concert by Rockset Choir

### **Wednesday 20 December 2017**

7.00pm – Gordon Chapel – Carol Service

### **Friday 22 December 2017**

6.45pm – Bellie Church – ‘Take Note’ Christmas Celebration

### **Sunday 24 December 2017 – Christmas Eve**

10.00am – Gordon Chapel – Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament

11.00am – Speymouth Church – United Worship

4.30pm – Garmouth Village Hall – Carol Service

6.30pm – Bellie Church – Christmas Eve Carol Service

7.30pm – St Mary’s RC Church – Carol Service followed at

8.00pm by ‘Shepherds’ Mass’ (formerly Midnight Mass)

11.30pm – Gordon Chapel – Christmas night Holy Communion

### **Monday 25 December 2017 – Christmas Day**

10.00am – Gordon Chapel – Christmas Day Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament.

11.00am – Bellie Church – Family Worship

11.30am – St Mary’s RC Church – Christmas Mass

### **Sunday 31 December 2017**

11.00am – Speymouth Church – United Worship

12.00 noon – St Mary’s RC Church – Sunday Mass

### **Monday 1 January 2018**

10.00am – St Mary’s RC Church – New Year Mass

### **Sunday 7 January 2018**

3.00pm – Gordon Chapel – Christingle Service.

## **BREW AND BLETHER**

**GRACE HENDRY**

The next meeting will be on Friday 1st December in Speymouth Church Hall from 2pm till 3.30pm.  
All are welcome.

We have had a good year and been well supported. However we are always happy to have anyone new join our happy band.  
A big thank you to my team Jenny, Dorothy and Stanley.

We look forward to seeing you on the 2nd February, 2018.  
We take a break in the month of January.



Best wishes to you all for at Christmas time and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.  
Do remember "A smile is a curve that sets everything straight"

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## **A WORD FROM OUR INTERIM MODERATOR**

**REV. JOHN MORRISON**

As many of you will by now be aware on November 19th Seoras Orr preached as sole nominee before the joint congregation of Bellie and Speymouth church. After the worship a vote was held and Seoras was unanimously elected as minister by the congregation. Therefore once we have gone through all the necessary procedures and obtained the approval of Presbytery the formal call will be sent to Seoras and arrangements to ordain and induct him as minister to the parish of Bellie and Speymouth will be made. We anticipate this will be around mid to late January though no actual dates have been agreed yet.

In the time from now until then Rev Morris Smith will continue as Locum Minister and I shall continue as Interim Moderator.

We give thanks to God for his answers to all your prayers and look forward eagerly to this next step in your work and witness as a congregation of God's people in this parish.

God bless you all.



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## **COFFEE AND CHAT**

**JENNIE CAMERON**

Christmas is coming !

Coffee and Chat will host their Christmas themed day on Monday 18th December. All are welcome to come along and enjoy some festive treats !

We have had another very successful year and our thanks go to Rota volunteers and all who support us week by week. We will be thinking of all those who are now unable to be part of our Monday mornings, we miss them !

Coffee and Chat will be closed on December 25th, January 1st and January 8th 2018 , reopening on January 15th 2018 .

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy Happy New Year .<sub>3</sub>





Rag Bags – Just a reminder that we have the container situated down at the playing fields and are continuing to raise funds through this. This in turn has allowed us to become a Fairtrade church which we have been aiming to do for some time. So thank you for your continued support.

Plastic Pollution – What can we do?

I have been aware of the concern on the internet and the television recently about the amount of plastic that we are using. I thought I would try to do my weekly shopping and attempt to buy foodstuffs without plastic packaging. However it was impossible. This highlighted to me that, what can one person do alone and I concluded we all have to make an effort together to change the situation.



## GREENPEACE

I have a summary of a story from the Greenpeace website which I found encouraging that one person can make a difference with a little help.

Leah Bromley had noticed that Boots was selling PVC cosmetic and toiletry bags with the sales line “Plastic is Fantastic”. The slogan contradicted everything Leah understood about a sustainable lifestyle and the negative impacts of the use of plastic. Leah contacted the company pointing out her concerns. They replied saying they would pass on her concerns. Two months later she hadn’t heard anything more and contacted them again but got a negative response.

Then Sky news picked up Leah’s story and ran a news item about it. Only then did Boots respond saying they would remove the slogan and remove the items from their store from 2018.

So good news the actions of one person are making a difference. PVC is particularly bad for the environment. Plastic is on the whole is a single use, non-biodegradable product which will be present in our ecosystems for years to come.

I have a list of things we can do to help the situation and it applies to young and older people.

1. Stop using plastic straws.
2. Skip the plastic bottles. Drink beverages from reusable drink containers.
3. Say no to take away coffee cups. Buy one to reuse. I noticed Costa are selling reusable cups but you can get them anywhere.
4. Use cloth nappies instead of disposable ones.
5. Ditch the disposable razor.
6. Give up gum. It’s made of a synthetic rubber, which is a plastic.
7. Get the plastic off your face. Some face wash tubes have plastic beads in them. However the UK government has now banned plastic beads in these products and it comes into force in 2018. Mind you it is still worth checking.
8. Avoid excessive food packaging where possible.
9. Use refill containers for detergents. There are increasing amount of places you can refill your bottles but I don’t know about Moray.
10. Say no to disposable cutlery.
11. Get your milk delivered in glass bottles. (Well, we used to do that, maybe we’ll be back to that soon).
12. Carry a shopping bag not plastic, (we are good at this one most people are doing this).



The information in this article is from the Greenpeace website so if you wish further reading check it out. I didn’t put the amounts of the plastic items that are thrown away but it is on the website. Just to say its scary large amounts.



Traidcraft – Thank you to everyone who supported our recent “Pop Up Shop”. With the run up to Christmas we will be having the Traidcraft table set up at Bellie every Sunday up till Christmas. Catalogues are available if you wish to place an order but if you are not needing anything but wish to donate to Traidcraft we have donating boxes in both churches.

Stamps – It is getting into the time of year where we start to have more stamps with the sending of Christmas cards. So I thought it might be a good time to remind you that we will have the stamp collecting box out at the door and for Speymouth it is a bag to put your stamps in. Thank you for continuing to collect stamps and we will be sending them off at the end of January.

# MEAT FREE MONDAY



Meat Free Mondays -The two recipes for this newsletter is from the recent Vegetarian Cookery Night held in Elgin in connection with the Eco-congregation Network for Moray. It was a very successful evening where you had to pair up with a partner and cook the recipe then we all shared the dishes together to try out the variety of recipes.

## Pepperonata

4 tbsp olive oil, 1 onion, halved and finely sliced, 2 red (bell) peppers, cut into strips,

2 green (bell) peppers, cut into strips, 2 yellow (bell) peppers cut into strips, 2 garlic cloves crushed,

2 x 400g/14oz cans chopped tomatoes, drained, 2 tbsp chopped coriander (cilantro),

2 tbsp chopped pitted black olives, salt and pepper.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onion and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring until just beginning to colour.

Add the peppers and garlic and cook for a further 3-4 minutes.

Stir in the tomatoes and coriander and season with salt and pepper. Cover the pan and cook the vegetables gently for about 30 minutes or until the mixture is dry.

Stir in the pitted black olives and serve immediately.

If you don't like the flavour of coriander you could change it for flat leaf parsley.

If you want to make it more substantial you can transfer the pepperonata to an oven proof dish and crack some eggs into it and bake in the oven till the eggs are cooked.

## The Best Vegan Chocolate Cake

300ml non-dairy milk (soy, almond etc.), 1 tbsp lemon juice,

150g non-dairy spread (like Flora Freedom, Tesco have it),

3 tbsp golden syrup, agave or maple syrup (maple will make it a slightly less sweet cake),

1tsp instant coffee granules (or espresso powder)

275g self-raising flour (or plain all-purpose with 3 tsp baking powder), 175g castor sugar,

4tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda.

For the vegan chocolate frosting:-

75g non-dairy spread, (Flora Freedom), 200g powdered icing sugar,

4tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, 2 tbsp water

Method.

Preheat oven to 180 C /160 C fan /gas mark 4 (350F). Lightly grease 2 x 20cm /8inch round baking tins.

Stir the lemon juice into the soya milk and set aside.

In a pan over a medium heat, melt the butter, syrup and coffee granules together. Set aside and cool slightly.

Sieve the flour, cocoa, caster sugar and bicarbonate of soda into a large mixing bowl.

Pour the milk and melted spread mixture over the flour mixture and stir well until it becomes a smooth batter.

Divide the mixture between two prepared pans and bake for 30 – 35 minutes or until an inserted skewer comes out clean.

Allow the cakes to cool in the tins for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Meanwhile, to make the icing beat together all the ingredients until smooth.

When the cakes are completely cold, sandwich together with half the icing. Spread the remaining icing over the top of the cake. (If you want to ice the sides as well double the quantities of the chocolate frosting ingredients).



Although it is winter just now, we are looking forward to next summer and the opportunity to take part in a group trip to Sistarovat in Romania to work with children who are needy, orphaned or vulnerable, spreading God's Word and taking His love to those who have not heard. The Friendship Camp in Sistarovat is run by Friendship International and our brothers and sisters in Christ who lead the summer weeks of camp are now counted as true friends by us and our congregation. They have been in touch to say that they would be delighted if we sent a team again next

year. Spending time with the kids there is a unique experience and although they benefit from our going over there to serve, we benefit ourselves in so many ways.

It's hot, it's challenging, it's hard work but it's also a rewarding, fulfilling and life-changing experience. If you are young, (you must be 16 to join the team and remember you are only as young as you feel) fit and able and want to serve God and help spread His Love to others in a practical way, then please consider joining Team Romania. 2018. There are still a few places available. Contact Isabel MacLeod for further details.



## GETTING TO KNOW.....YOU!

### SUE PIANTA-SCOTT

**I have been at Bellie....**since 2011.

**I came to Bellie because.....**I wanted to be part of a Christian community and to get to know some of the local folk. The first Sunday I went I thought I was ten minutes early, 10.50! Very embarrassing, not to be repeated!

**One thing I enjoy about Bellie is...**the spirit of warmth and mutual belief through all ages. Can't not mention Bellie Babes and Book Club.

**I find a lot of joy in....**living right by the Moray Firth, being with family and friends, enjoying cooking and music. And going to figure skating competitions where ever they are in Europe or America.

**If I won the lottery I would.....** make sure our families were looked after to make them secure. Then ask the Lord to identify one community where I could really make a difference and improve their lives. Obviously thinking lots of money here!

**If I was stranded on a desert island and could have one luxury with me, it would be ...** a radio that had a good signal and book to write in. I assume the Bible is a given.

**If I could travel anywhere in the world it would be to...** New Orleans, meet the people, hear their music. I love New Orleans jazz Or I would go up inner water way from Vancouver Island on a ferry or cruise ship and see the whales.

**The title of a book about me would be...** I have nearly finished one actually, it's called "In Search of truth and Pasts". It focuses on finding my Italian roots.

**If I was to create a piece of art, the subject would be...** something to illustrate belonging and connection. So two people holding hands or group of people connecting. In bronze of course!

**If I could go back in time, I would travel to....** 1980 because my Italian grandparents were alive and I would love to have met them. This is a really difficult one though as right now my life is great and I'm not sure I would want to go back.







This term we started off with a fishy theme on Friday evenings and if you've been in Bellie Hall you will see the Rainbow Fish, made by the children, on our Take Note noticeboard. We enjoyed hearing the story about the Rainbow Fish and also acting out the story of Jonah and the Whale.

During harvest we had a harvest theme evening and the children made a harvest craft to take home. We did manage to get outside in the garden on a few evenings for games before the clocks changed.

Now we are busy making preparations for our Christmas Play, which this year is called "The Christmas Present". Rehearsals have started and we have already started practising our Christmas songs!

Listed below are the dates in December when Take Note will be singing. Do come along and support the children at any of these events.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 10th December

Take Note singing at Spey Bay Carol Service at Spey Bay Hall at 6.30 p.m.  
Everyone welcome.

Friday 22nd December

Take Note Christmas Celebration and Play in Bellie Church at 6.45 p.m.  
Bring the family along to get you in the Christmas mood!

# Take Note

## "The Christmas Present!"

With refreshments to follow

## In BELLIE CHURCH

### Friday 22nd December

at 6.45pm

All welcome



**cashforkids**

This year Take Note are supporting MFR Radio's  
"Cash for Kids."

Donations for this cause would be very welcome.



## MESSY CHURCH

ISABEL MACLEOD

PHOTOS BY CLARE LAMBOURNE

The Christmas Messy Church turned out to be a very active and enjoyable celebration of the Christmas story as told on an "M&M" theme. There were crafts and a maze and a giant board game with baubles, angels and other Christmas favourites. But the afternoon was mainly about marking Jesus' birth.

Messy Church has a number of regular worshippers who have loyally supported us over the year and we hope that in 2018 Messy Church will continue to grow and that people of all ages will come to faith.

We wish a very Merry Christmas to everyone in our Community and we wish you a peaceful and blessed New Year.





## HAYLEY'S GARDEN

CLARE LAMBOURNE

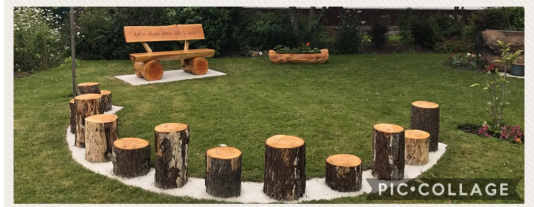


Pupils at Mosstodloch Primary School have helped create a lasting memorial to Hayley Smith who was a loved volunteer at the school, just as she was a loved member of our church community.

With the help of the school's head teacher, Liz Rennie, the pupils, staff and parents have worked together to create a garden within the grounds of the school along with Hayley's dad, Gary who is the janitor at the school.

Children have each painted a pebble with a message on it, which have all been laid in cement forming a feature in the garden.

The garden was unveiled in the summer with Hayley's parents, Gary and Lynn in attendance.



PIC-COLLAGE

## FOCHABERS NEEDS YOU



BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER



My name is Kevin Oakes and I am the Director of the Buckie Community Theatre Company. If there is enough interest in Fochabers and surrounding area I would like to start a similar venture at The Fochabers Institute

**Adults : Wednesday Evenings 18.30-20.30**

I would also like to offer this Community Theatre venture to our younger people from 5 to 9 year olds with their own group "Little Starz" ( Wednesday 17.15-18.15)

**Little Starz : Wednesday Evenings 17.15-18.15**

In the first instance, anyone interested in becoming involved in some way in this new venture please contact Kevin:  
email : buckiecommunitytheatre@yahoo.co.uk  
mobile : 07583571573  
BCT : 01542 488485



FOCHABERS COMMUNITY THEATRE



## SUNDAY CLUB

MARGARET MCINNES

The theme throughout this session at Sunday Club has been travel and journeying. Each week we have used the title “Go...” and added an appropriate title to that journey. Go create, go sacrifice, go bless, journeying right through to go settle. Making the signpost has linked the stories we have studied and enjoyed over the weeks.

In December we will begin our Advent journey, looking forward to celebrating Christmas!

### A child's prayer

Thank you for the world so sweet,

Thank you for the food we eat,

Thank you for the birds that sing,

Thank you God for everything.

Amen



## WATER AID

MARGARET MCINNES

The Young Church thanks all members of the congregation for their generous support of the Water Aid Life-giving bottles harvest appeal. The fantastic sum of £376.47 has now been counted and sent to Water Aid. An extra special thank you to Betty who counted and banked all those pennies!



Water is life

At Water Aid they never get tired of talking about water. Why? Because, quite simply, we can't live without it.

This inspiring photo of a little boy in Madagascar - shows how water is enabling people to unlock their potential and transform their lives. Forever.



Clean water is something so many of us take for granted. But being able to wash regularly in a clean, private place is essential to lead a dignified life.

Our green buckets will remain in both Bellie and Speymouth as we continue to collect pennies for Water Aid and those less fortunate than ourselves in other parts of the world.







## How Well Do You Know Your Christmas Carols?

Match the title with the lines from the song.

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ___ O Little Town of Bethlehem      | 1. Good tidings we bring to you and your kin                           |
| ___ What Child Is This?             | 2. Long lay the world in sin and error pining                          |
| ___ Love Came Down at Christmas     | 3. Please have snow and mistletoe and presents on the tree             |
| ___ Go, Tell It on the Mountain     | 4. Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day                |
| ___ Jolly Old Saint Nicholas        | 5. From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold     |
| ___ We Wish You a Merry Christmas   | 6. Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary           |
| ___ Of the Father's Love Begotten   | 7. The ox and lamb kept time   |
| ___ Carol of the Bells              | 8. From God our Heavenly Father this blessed angel came                |
| ___ God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen     | 9. Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light   |
| ___ Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella | 10. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation                         |
| ___ Pat-a-Pan                       | 11. The world, they treat you mean, they treat me mean, too            |
| ___ Sweet Little Jesus Boy          | 12. And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains            |
| ___ O Holy Night                    | 13. On December five and twenty  |
| ___ Silver Bells                    | 14. From the eastern kingdoms come the wise men far                    |
| ___ It Came Upon a Midnight Clear   | 15. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light              |
| ___ Hark! The Herald Angels Sing    | 16. Children laughing, people passing, greeting smile after smile      |
| ___ I'll Be Home for Christmas      | 17. The blind will see, the lame will walk, the dead will rise again   |
| ___ Away in the Manger              | 18. O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way                        |
| ___ Sing We Now of Christmas        | 19. Star and angels gave the sign                                      |
| ___ Angels, We Have Heard on High   | 20. Peace on Earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled          |
| ___ Silent Night                    | 21. Treetops glisten & children listen to hear sleighbells in the snow |
| ___ Mary, Did You Know?             | 22. Lean your ear this way   |
| ___ We Three Kings                  | 23. The men of olden days gave the King of Kings their praise          |
| ___ O Come All Ye Faithful          | 24. Behold, throughout the heavens, there shone a holy light           |
| ___ Joy to the World                | 25. He is Alpha & Omega, He the source, the ending He                  |
| ___ Little Drummer Boy              | 26. Let Earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare Him room       |
| ___ The Holly and the Ivy           | 27. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes                             |
| ___ Fum, Fum, Fum                   | 28. Round yon Virgin Mother and Child                                  |
| ___ Jingle Bells                    | 29. Beautiful is the mother! Hush! Hush! Beautiful is her Child!       |
| ___ White Christmas                 | 30. One seems to hear words of good cheer from everywhere              |

Answers to the Christmas Carols can be found on page 16.

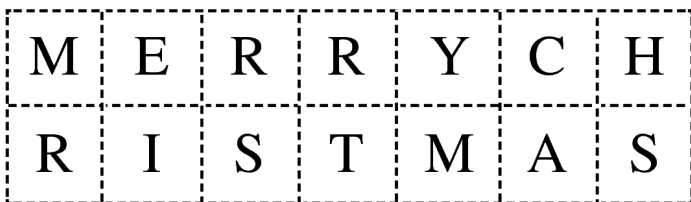
### Christmas Word Game

## Words in a Word



Use only the letters in Merry Christmas to find a word for each definition. Cut out the letters below and use them to help you make words to fit the clues. Work with a partner and take turns finding words and writing them on the lines.

- Twelve months \_\_\_\_\_
- Alike \_\_\_\_\_
- Large town \_\_\_\_\_
- Warmth \_\_\_\_\_
- Grows on your head \_\_\_\_\_
- Part of a flower \_\_\_\_\_
- Money \_\_\_\_\_
- Divide with someone \_\_\_\_\_
- Water vapor \_\_\_\_\_
- Male sheep \_\_\_\_\_
- A seat \_\_\_\_\_
- Our planet \_\_\_\_\_
- Bashful \_\_\_\_\_
- Holds up a sail \_\_\_\_\_
- Long-tailed rodent \_\_\_\_\_



## The Meaning Of Christmas

Far away in Bethlehem, a Baby Boy was born;  
Born with neither riches nor with fame,  
Yet Wise Men came from all around to  
bring to Him their gifts,  
And peace was felt by all who heard His name.

Angels watched Him as He slept,  
and gently rocked His bed;  
Their voices singing softly in His ear;  
His Mother and His Father both gave thanks to God above  
For the greatest gift of all, their Son, so dear

They knew His life upon this earth  
would not be filled with wealth,  
They also knew He would encounter strife;  
But most of all, they knew that He would be a loving Child,  
And teach the love of God throughout His life.

At Christmas, as we celebrate  
this Birth of Jesus Christ,  
Let's keep in mind the truth of Christmas Day;  
For it's not the Christmas wrappings,  
nor the gifts that lie within,  
But our gift of love to others in every way...

## If Jesus Came to Your House

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two,  
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,  
And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best.

And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there,  
That serving Him in your home is joy beyond compare!

But when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door,  
With arms outstretched in welcome to your Heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,  
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?

Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard-  
And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some humn books out?  
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?

And I wonder- if the Saviour spent a day or two with you-  
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?  
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace?  
And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?

Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read,  
And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go,  
Or would you, maybe change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,  
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,  
Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things that you would do  
If Jesus came in person to spend the holidays with you.



## Twinkle, Twinkle

Twinkle, twinkle shining star  
Wise men followed from afar!  
Worshipping Him  
With gifts to bring  
For they knew He was the King.  
Twinkle, twinkle shining star  
Wise men followed from afar!



## The Christmas Story

by Leanne Guenther

Once upon a time,  
A long, long time ago.  
Begins the story of a baby,  
That most of you should know.

His daddy's name was Joseph,  
And Mary was His mom,  
This babe was very special  
He was God's only Son.

Some angels came from heaven,  
And they began to sing.  
To the shepherds in the fields below,  
"Glad tidings do we bring!"

A bright star lit the heavens,  
To light the magi's way,  
To the baby in the manger  
Who was born on Christmas day.

And all who gathered round Him,  
Rejoiced and praised His birth.  
For the babe, the King, named Jesus,  
Is our Saviour here on earth!



## 12 reasons Christians don't attend sporting events

1. The coach never came to visit me.
2. Every time I went, they asked for money.
3. The people sitting in my row didn't seem very friendly.
4. The seats were very hard.
5. The referees made a decision I didn't agree with.
6. I was sitting with hypocrites—they only came to see what others were wearing!
7. Some games went into overtime and I was late getting home.
8. The band played some songs I had never heard before.
9. The games are scheduled on my only day to sleep in and run errands.
10. My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up.
11. Since I read a book on sports, I feel that I know more than the coaches, anyway.
12. I don't want to take my children because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best.

## 17th Century Nun's Prayer

Traditional, author unknown

*Lord* Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from that fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memory of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a Saint - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

AMEN.



## REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

ISABEL MACLEOD

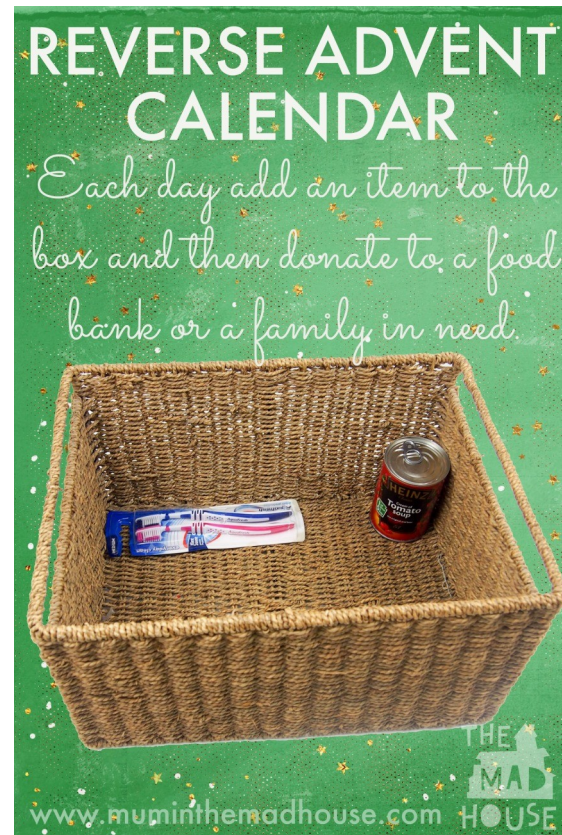
It's not too late! There are still a number of days left in Advent. Collect an Advent box from the church and start filling it with items suitable for donating to Moray Food Bank. A standard Advent Calendar has a door to open and a treat to receive every day from 1st December until Christmas Eve but with our scheme, each day in Advent we place an item into the box for the Food Bank.

On Christmas Eve at the Carol service, you can return the box and, along with all the others, it will be delivered to Moray Food Bank in January. Boxes can also be returned at other times close to that date.

Items such as cereals, pulses, dried goods like rice and pasta, tinned goods, jam, marmalade, teabags, coffee, sugar, flour, crisps, biscuits etc as well as toiletries like toothpaste or soap are all welcomed.

There is no obligation to fill the box - if you just want to donate one or perhaps 2 items each week or even just bring along a couple of things on Christmas Eve then that is also OK - the more goods we have, the better.

Why not reach out in love and give some support to those in need of a helping hand over the festive period?



## WEDDINGS

Samantha Lee Leslie to Craig Patrick McGovern

— 3rd June in Bellie Church

Linda Louise Hepburn to Duncan Alexander Horne

— 7th October in Craigellachie Hotel

Kelly Anne Martin to Malcolm Stuart Cruickshank

— 24th November in Speymouth Church



## BAPTISM

Daisy Anne Holmes on the 22nd of October in Bellie Church.

## FUNERALS

|                |                |             |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| 12th September | Jimmy Milton   | Fochabers   |
| 14th September | Mabel Christie | Fochabers   |
| 2nd November   | David Chisholm | Mosstodloch |



## Bellie - Welcome Rota

[illegible]

## TEAMS

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| ADAM , M arjory       |
| CLARK, Alison         |
| DAWSON, Joyce         |
| ECKERSLEY , Isobel    |
| CANT , Lorraine       |
| M ilne, Kathleen      |
| KING, M argaret       |
| M ALCOLM , Doreen     |
| LAMBOURNE, Ruth       |
| M ARQUIS, Caroline    |
| M EARNNS, Ben         |
| M EARNNS, V era       |
| M URRAY , Jean        |
| PATERSON, Alex        |
| PATERSON, Alison      |
| YOUNG, Irene          |
| PERT, David           |
| PICKSLEY , Rita       |
| THOM SON, M argaret   |
| WILLIAM SON, Louise   |
| PIANTA-SCOTT, Sue     |
| WILKINSON Lorraine    |
| WILKINSON, Steven     |
| WHYTE, M arjory       |
| CROSBY , Wendy        |
| M cCONNA CHIE, Sandra |
| M ILLS, Helen         |
| MILLS, John           |
| CAM ERON, Donald      |
| CAM ERON, Jenny       |
| NICHOLSON, Heat her   |
| BRUCE, Sandra         |
| HAROLD, Irene         |
| RAM SEY, Jean         |
| STUART, Sybil         |
| HORTON, Vivien        |



## BELLIE BABES

ANNETTE MEIGHAN

Autumn has sped past in Bellie Babes and we have had new faces join us with new babies, and with some other Mum's having to go back to work we have welcomed Grannies and childminders who now look after their children for them. However the numbers continue to be steady every Friday morning and great fun is always had each and every session.



On Saturday 28th October a small group of mum's hosted our fundraising event for this year. 'Pampering, purchasing and Prosecco evening' was held and what an amazing and wonderful event it was, with different treatment sessions, goodies to buy, a raffle, and a place to sit and chat to friends with fairy lights and lanterns adorning the halls, corridors and Church, it made it all look beautiful and restful and over 100 of us had a wonderful evening together. They raised a truly magnificent amount of over £1000 and enormous thanks go to the 5 girls – Steph Gilchrist, JoAnne Pike, Claire Reid, Kym Morrison and Pam Ryan for all their hard work, team spirit and dedication and love for Bellie babes.

Then a fortnight later Steph Gilchrist was back in the hall again, offering Bellie Babes families photo sessions for an extra fundraising effort for a special Christmas photo shoot. Another huge success. Thank you. So come the new year we will be investigating some new equipment for the group and for the little ones..... Our Christmas party this year is on Saturday 16th December and we have crafts and games prepared and the Nativity story is ready. We have even requested a special visit from a very busy person.



Bellie Babes will continue on the 22nd December, 29th December and the 5th January as usual. We welcome anyone to join us who has a baby or toddler up to preschool age or if you are pregnant. Our sessions are every Friday from 9.30am—11am in Bellie Church Hall, please come and join us.



## A Christmas Blessing

May love come alive within your heart  
As Christmas time draws near.  
May hope fill each room you decorate  
And bring joy to those you hold dear.  
May peace be before you at every meal  
And faith ring through every song.  
For Christ is alive, the light of the world  
May he bless you all season long.



## CHURCH CHRISTMAS SALE



A huge thank you to all who came along to the church sale on Saturday 2nd December in Bellie Church Hall. The magnificent sum of over £1600 was raised for church funds. Thank you to all who helped make the event such a success!



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**Articles for the spring issue  
should be with the Editor  
by 11th February 2018 at  
the latest.**

Scottish Charity Number  
SCO05310



## ANSWERS TO CHRISTMAS CAROL QUIZ ON PAGE 11

- |   |   |                                 |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <u>14</u> O Little Town of Bethlehem      | <u>22</u> Pat-a-Pan                     | <u>27</u> Silent Night          |
| <u>6</u> What Child Is This?              | <u>10</u> Sweet Little Jesus Boy        | <u>16</u> Mary, Did You Know?   |
| <u>18</u> Love Came Down at Christmas     | <u>2</u> O Holy Night                   | <u>8</u> We Three Kings         |
| <u>23</u> Go, Tell It on the Mountain     | <u>15</u> Silver Bells                  | <u>9</u> O Come All Ye Faithful |
| <u>21</u> Jolly Old Saint Nicholas        | <u>5</u> It Came Upon a Midnight Clear  | <u>25</u> Joy to the World      |
| <u>1</u> We Wish You a Merry Christmas    | <u>19</u> Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  | <u>7</u> Little Drummer Boy     |
| <u>24</u> Of the Father's Love Begotten   | <u>3</u> I'll Be Home for Christmas     | <u>30</u> The Holly and the Ivy |
| <u>29</u> Carol of the Bells              | <u>26</u> Away in the Manger            | <u>12</u> Fum, Fum, Fum         |
| <u>4</u> God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen      | <u>13</u> Sing We Now of Christmas      | <u>17</u> Jingle Bells          |
| <u>28</u> Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella | <u>11</u> Angels, We Have Heard on High | <u>20</u> White Christmas       |