



Weekly Newsletter No 37 - Sunday 29 November 2020

Sunday Worship

Having attacked the sound system for the on-line streaming of the service a couple of weeks ago then having attacked Seoras's laptop the following week, we thought we had it beat. No chance! Last weekend, the little devil hid Seoras's church keys. It was not until Monday morning that he found them. Now, we wonder what mischief it will get into this week – watch this space!

Last Sunday, Bellie Church was at capacity. All the seats were taken including the 'naughty seat' (No 5 because it has such a poor view of the chancel). This seat goes to the last person to arrive when we have a full church. There is still space at Speymouth and the service there is exactly the same as Bellie.

Seoras is away this weekend but we are delighted that Margaret King will lead us in Worship. That means of course that Hamish, the Theological Highland Coo will be taking a break as well. It is unlikely we can live stream the service from Bellie Church so please don't be too disappointed that our technological skills aren't up to scratch (well, mine anyway). There are however, plenty of opportunities to join in worship through the Church of Scotland Website – go to the 'WORSHIP' page and scroll down to the bit that says, 'Kirk Services on-line'.



Advent.

Today, Sunday 29 November, 2020 is the first day of the season of Advent. As we prepare for Christmas, have a look at the Church of Scotland website. 'Bright Hope For Tomorrow' is the theme of the Church's 2020 Advent Calendar, based on the lines 'Strength for Today, Bright Hope for Tomorrow' from the hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness."

It starts today with an introductory video on the website from the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, and will then continue from Tuesday 1 December for next four weeks. You are invited to sign up for a daily email or check the online Advent Calendar for some daily inspiration.

Christmas is Looking (a bit) Better

26 sleeps to go!



It can be somewhat annoying to read, see or hear in the media that 'Christmas is cancelled'. What they mean of course is that there is less opportunity for a jamboree of spending and feasting. We can still celebrate Christmas, we can enjoy the festivities, we can enjoy giving presents and gifts to others but we do these things in the name of Jesus as we celebrate the anniversary of his birth and we-do-it-carefully. The only present we don't want to give is the COVID virus.

As we approach Christmas and the relaxing of some of the rules for social mixing, it is even more important to keep our guard up. The latest figures show that while Moray is relatively COVID safe, up till last Monday, the place in Moray with the highest rate of COVID infection was the council ward of *Fochabers, Clochan, Aultmore and Ordiquish*.¹ – 'Yes, that's us'. Fortunately, a check on Saturday morning showed the rate had dropped back – phew! The actual numbers are small but it emphasises the need to keep our distances and that includes when we are in church. Until the vaccines arrive, social distancing and sticking to the restrictions of not mixing, especially at home, is the best way to keep this virus at bay. We need to hang in there for the next few months.

1. Public Health Scotland up to 25 November 2020

The Reverse Advent Calendar is doing great. Lisa's car boot was absolutely full with bags of kindness last Sunday. There is still some time left to gift some more things to the Foodbank for families who are less fortunate. To all who have given, 'Thank you' – to those who will give or give more, another 'Thank You'.

There has been a great response to the offer of a Christmas lunch for people living on their own.



We also have one driver (a couple) so one more, preferably a couple, would be great. If you would like to deliver a few meals on Christmas Day in and around Fochabers, just give me a shout on 01343 820671 or email at jmconnachie78@gmail.com or personally. This should bring a Christmas smile to those involved and I bet the biggest smiles of all will be those delivering the meals.

They're at it again! – it's Messy Church Christmas 'Click and Collect'



The Messy Church Team are organising a 'Click and Collect' Christmas Cracker.

The bags of Christmas goodies will be available outside Bellie Church from

2.00pm to 3.00pm on Saturday 5 December 2020.

If you want a bag, and these are not just for kids, please 'book your place' as before by contacting John McConnachie on 01343 820671 or (preferably) at jmconnachie78@gmail.com or Isabel MacLeod at isabelmacleod72@hotmail.com. We need to know how many bags you require.

If you can't manage to collect your bags and would like one, please let us know your address and they can be delivered.

Christmas Carols Drive-in.

Our Mission and Outreach Team are organising a Christmas Carol Drive-in Service.
This will be in the car park at

**Christie's Garden Centre
6.30pm on Sunday 13 December 2020.**

The Carol service will last about half an hour – that's 30 minutes in posh money!

Entry is free but you **must** register on-line.

Register by contacting jmconnachie78@gmail.com or
isabelmacleod72@hotmail.com.

**We need your name, email address, number of people in the car,
make and model of car, registration number.**

The arrangements so far are:

1. Anyone intending to attend must book their place on-line – you can book for someone who is not on-line but they must be 'booked'.
2. Your place will be acknowledged and you will get an 'e-ticket' which will include the words of the Christmas Carols to be sung.
3. Anyone attending **MUST** be in a car.
4. Only one household per car – **NO SHARING OF CARS** with others who are not in your domestic 'bubble'.
5. Start arriving from 6.00pm onwards using the main entrance of the car park.
6. Park where directed by the stewards.
7. Switch off the engine of the car – that means no heating so wrap-up.
8. Switch off the lights of your car.
9. Everyone **MUST** stay within the car.
10. Open, preferably, only one window in the car.
11. Sing you hearts silly!
12. At the end, remain in the car with the engine switched off until directed to move by the stewards.
13. Leave only by the exit to Lennox Crescent as directed by the stewards.
14. If you must leave before the end eg someone in the car feels sick, attract the attention of the stewards by flashing the car headlights.

Please note

1. There can be no 'foot passengers'. You must be in a car.
2. There are no toilet facilities so 'go before you go'.

**Book your place asap and not later than
5.00pm on Thursday 10 December 2020**



Online church youth group for S1-S4



Our church youth group 'TGIS' has been running online via Zoom since February, and has been great fun! It has been a joy to get to know a handful of the young ones in our community and to share our amazing God with them. We've recently had 4 new leaders join the team (Alison McDonald, Henry Archibald, Heather Bell and Holly Burrell), and would love to reach more young people. For any young people in S1-S4, we'd love you to join us for a relaxed

time of...

* Games, chat, learning about God, encouragement, and friendship! *

When? Sunday evenings (once a fortnight), from 7.30-8.30pm.

If you're interested please contact Debbie Orr on 07522334570

or deborah.honor.orr@gmail.com - she'll be more than happy to answer any questions or just tell you more!

Go on guys, give it a try – it really is great fun.

Weekly Offering envelopes.

The Weekly offering envelopes for 2021 will shortly be distributed to those who still use them. To facilitate the return of these envelopes and those remaining for 2020, a basket will be placed near the exit door of each of the churches after worship. The envelopes and any other donations can then be placed in the basket as people leave the church. While donations in the form of notes or cheques are preferable, coins can now be accepted and these will be counted in a COVID-safe manner.



Financially, all churches, including Bellie and Speymouth, are suffering from the effects of the coronavirus lock-downs etc so all donations to our church, large or small, are gratefully accepted.

Wow, that's a lot of information this week. You'll find a 'flyer' for the Christmas Carol Drive-in on our Facebook page so you can pass it round if you wish.

Please be careful as you go about this coming week. It would be nice if Fochabers wasn't the worst place for COVID infections – I'll let you know how we are doing next week.

In the meantime, thank you to everyone who is working so hard doing things for others – big and small acts of kindness.

Let's make this coming week 'being nice' week – remember to be nice to yourself.

May God Bless you and all you love.

John

Bye!



Fit are you lookin sae happy about?

Describe yourself in three words....

'Lazy!'