

The magazine of Portobello Baptist Church

# MESSENGER

www.portobellobaptist.co.uk • January 2013

*Now is the time for faith, God's love flows fresh and true.  
○ Lord of all our nights and days, we give ourselves to You;  
○ Our fervent gift receive, and fit us to fulfill,  
through all our years, in joy and tears, our Heav'nly Father's will.*

*Teach us where'er we live to act as in Your sight  
and do what You would have us do with radiant delight.  
Not choosing what is great, nor spurning what is small.  
○ lead us to Your noble work, and glorify us all.*

*How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news*

Cottish Registered Charity: SC015322



NEWS • TEACHING • ENCOURAGEMENT • LETTERS

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

		Tues	10.30 a.m.	Weekly Hour of Prayer
		Wed	7.30 p.m.	Midweek Prayer & Bible Study
January	16th	Wed	10.30 a.m.	Funeral of Mrs Jean Thomson followed by Portobello cemetery burial
	26th	Sat	9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Marriage Conference with Keynote speaker: Paul Tripp

## FUTURE SERMON PLAN

January

13th – Baptism

20th – “The Gift of Joy” (Isaiah Ch 35 vv 1 – 10)

27th – “When You Need A Miracle” (Matt. Ch 8 vv 1 – 17)

February

3rd – “What It Means To Take Jesus Seriously” (Matt. Ch 8 vv 18 – 34)

10th – Pulpit exchange with Old Parish Church (Rev Andrew Patterson)

17th – “Leadership Lessons From Jesus” (Matt. Ch 9 vv 1 – 38)

24th – “Getting Over Being Overwhelmed” (Matt. Ch 9 vv 37 – 38)

## SCOTTISH BAPTIST PRAYER LINK

January

6th John Craib: Part-time Chaplain at Low Moss Prison  
(*and minister of Bearsden Baptist Church*)  
David Vogan: Part-time Chaplain Nethervale Care Home,  
Auchlochan, (*and minister of Harestanes Baptist Church*)  
Queen's Park, Glasgow:

13th Renfrew

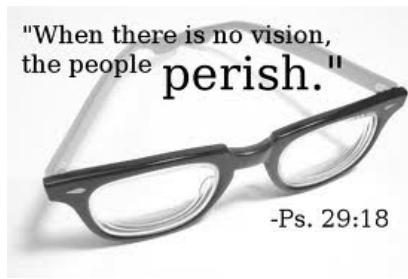
20th Rosyth & Rothesay (Ardbeg)

27th Saltcoats (South Beach) & Sanquhar

"When there is no vision,  
the people perish."

January 2013

Dear Friends,



We are at the start of a new year. Where will God take us? We must avoid being like some, who never bother thinking through their plans and end up simply making things up as they go along.

T. E. Lawrence once said, "*All men dream but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds awake to the day to find it was all vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for the many act out their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible ...*"

Hudson Taylor had definite convictions about how God's work should be done. We can make our best plans and try to carry them out in our own strength. Or we can make careful plans and ask God to bless them. "*Yet another way of working is to begin with God; to ask His plans, and to offer ourselves to Him to carry out His purposes.*"

The verse from Proverbs reminds us that we must plan ahead according to a vision given by God. It would be irresponsible, and bad stewardship to "*make it up as we go along*". We all must be in a place where we can hear from God, and contribute to the direction of the Church. This is not just the responsibility of the management team, but each member must take their place. We are the body of Christ and each part has a place and a vital role to play in the future of Portobello Baptist Church.

One way in which we can express this is by joining the membership of the Church and taking an active part in Church meetings where we pray, discuss and plan ahead. For us to be able to vote and express views is vital for the direction of the church. We want to consult with all those who see our Church as their spiritual home. Perhaps if you have not yet joined, this is the time to do so. It is a further way of us saying "*I have committed myself, not just to God, but to this local expression of believers.*"

May God bless you as we travel through this year.

Your pastor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Smith", is written below the text "Your pastor".

## CHURCH FLOWER CALENDAR

The Church Flower calendar for 2013 is available on the Notice Board at the Church entrance foyer, if there are any dates that have a special family significance then please add your name into the relevant space.



(Ewan Sinclair)

## CHURCH DIRECTORY 2013

Please see Ewan if you would like to be included.

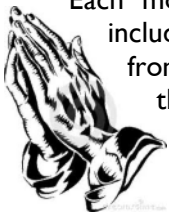
## GOLDEN WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS

Sheila & Jimmy Anderson celebrated fifty years of marriage on 29 December 2012 (the wedding ceremony took place in Morningside Baptist Church conducted by the Rev Kerr Spiers)

## PRAYING FOR THE FLOCK

(1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 6.4)

*(Eph 6:18) "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints"*



Each month this new section will include a cluster of names taken from the Church Directory so that we can uphold them particularly in prayer over this month.

## MARRIAGE CONFERENCE

WHERE: Charlotte Chapel

WHEN: January 26 2013  
9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

COST: £15 per individual

WHO: All married couples, whether newly wed or married for 60 years. Individuals and couples planning for marriage.

## What Did You Expect?

### Redeeming the Realities of Marriage

The surrounding culture would lead us to believe that a good marriage is rooted in romance. Scripture would rather say that a good marriage is the result of worship. If this confuses you then, this marriage conference is for you. Learn how practical these insights are for the everyday issues and situations of a real marriage.



The Keynote speaker, Paul Tripp, is a Pastor, Counsellor, Author & International Conference Speaker. He is the President of Paul Tripp Ministries and works to connect the transforming power of Jesus Christ to everyday life. This vision has led Paul to write thirteen books on Christian living and to travel around the world preaching and teaching. Paul's driving passion is to help people understand how the gospel of Jesus Christ speaks with practical hope into all the things people face in this broken world.

## BMS WORLD MISSION

### Collecting Stamps

Since the late 1920s, the BMS Stamp Bureau has been raising money for BMS World Mission by gathering and selling used postage stamps and other collectibles. In 1928, this first appeared in the BMS accounts as a contribution of £60; now, with your help, it raises several thousands of pounds each year.



As you send stamps, and other collectible items such as coins, medals and cards to the BMS Stamp Bureau, we collate and sell them on to collectors and dealers. The income raised is passed on to BMS to support our work of changing lives around the world.

Our very own Olive Nicol trims and packages the stamps collected over a period in the carton on the half-landing window cill and sends them off to BMS World Mission – do you still have a pile of envelope from all those Christmas cards? The stamps can be gathered together and taken round to Olive.

(Ewan Sinclair)

## THE MASTER-KEY WHICH FITS THE LOCKS!

"The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loved you!"

(Deuteronomy 7:7-8)

My gracious God, there is a honeycomb of delight and sweetness in these words! Will You put the rod of faith into my hand, this morning, and enable me to dip the end thereof into this rich provision, that my soul may eat and be satisfied, and that the eyes of my understanding may be enlightened?

"*Because the Lord loved you!*" This is His great "*reason*" for all of God's dealings with His redeemed people. It is a full and convincing answer to all the doubts and questionings with which Satan can perplex and distress the Lord's timid ones. The enemy of souls has, alas! a powerful confederate in the wicked unbelief which lurks within us; but they will both be vanquished when we have learned to use this weapon of war against them.

Come, my heart, try its blessed force and quality at this moment! The foe says, "*Why does God send you affliction, and sorrow, and suffering – when those who do not fear His Name have continual quietness and abounding prosperity?*"

If you can boldly answer, "*It is because the Lord loves me!*" then you will have given him such a sword – thrust as will free you, for a time, at least, from his cunning devices and fierce onslaughts.

Or, look at the text as a shaft of sunlight, piercing through a chink in the shuttered window of some dark experience. Bring your fears and forebodings out of their

dusky corners, and place them within the radiance of this light of love – you will be amazed to see them transformed into confident trusts – your doubts will vanish as if they had never been, and the evil and bitter things of life will all be transformed into blessings in a moment.

*"Because the Lord loved you!"* is the master-key which fits the locks of the hardest



question, and opens the mysteries of the deepest problem! It is a charm of wondrous efficacy, and every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ may not only rejoice in its possession – but use it constantly to obtain all the desire of his heart in spiritual things.

What ails you, poor soul? Is it loss of health, or friends, or means? Has God taken from you some dearly-loved one, and left you alone on this sad earth? Is He trying and proving you, by many and varied tests and troubles, *"to know what was in your heart"*? Whatever may be your immediate and peculiar sorrow, if you have grace and faith enough to say, *"This is because the Lord loves me!"* – then I dare to promise you that all the bitterness of the affliction will melt away – and the peace of God will fill you with a sweet contentment which surpasses understanding. No distress can withstand such Divine solace, no anguish can refuse the relief of this balm of Gilead. If all that happens to you can be traced directly or indirectly to the hand of your loving Lord – then how gladly should you bear life's

burdens, and how perfect should be the rest in which heart and mind should dwell!

O gracious Master, looking back over the years that are gone – the interminglings of grief and gladness, pass before my eyes as the clouds sail by on an April day. And though the memories of great affliction and sore bereavement cast deep shadows across the scene, and seem for a time to blot out all the brightness – yet, above and beyond those changeful skies – the sun has never ceased shining, and darkness as well as day has proclaimed the immutability of Your love. When the ears of my soul are attuned to catch the soft whisper of Your voice, I hear You saying: *"All this, My child, was because I loved you! Left to yourself, you would have destroyed yourself; but in Me was your help found. All the tribulations you have endured, were but My servants to whom I entrusted the necessary discipline of your earthly life. Do not forget those words of Mine: As many as I love – I rebuke and chasten!"*

(Susannah Spurgeon, "Words of Cheer and Comfort for Sick and Sorrowful Souls!" 1898)



(Deuteronomy 7:7-8)