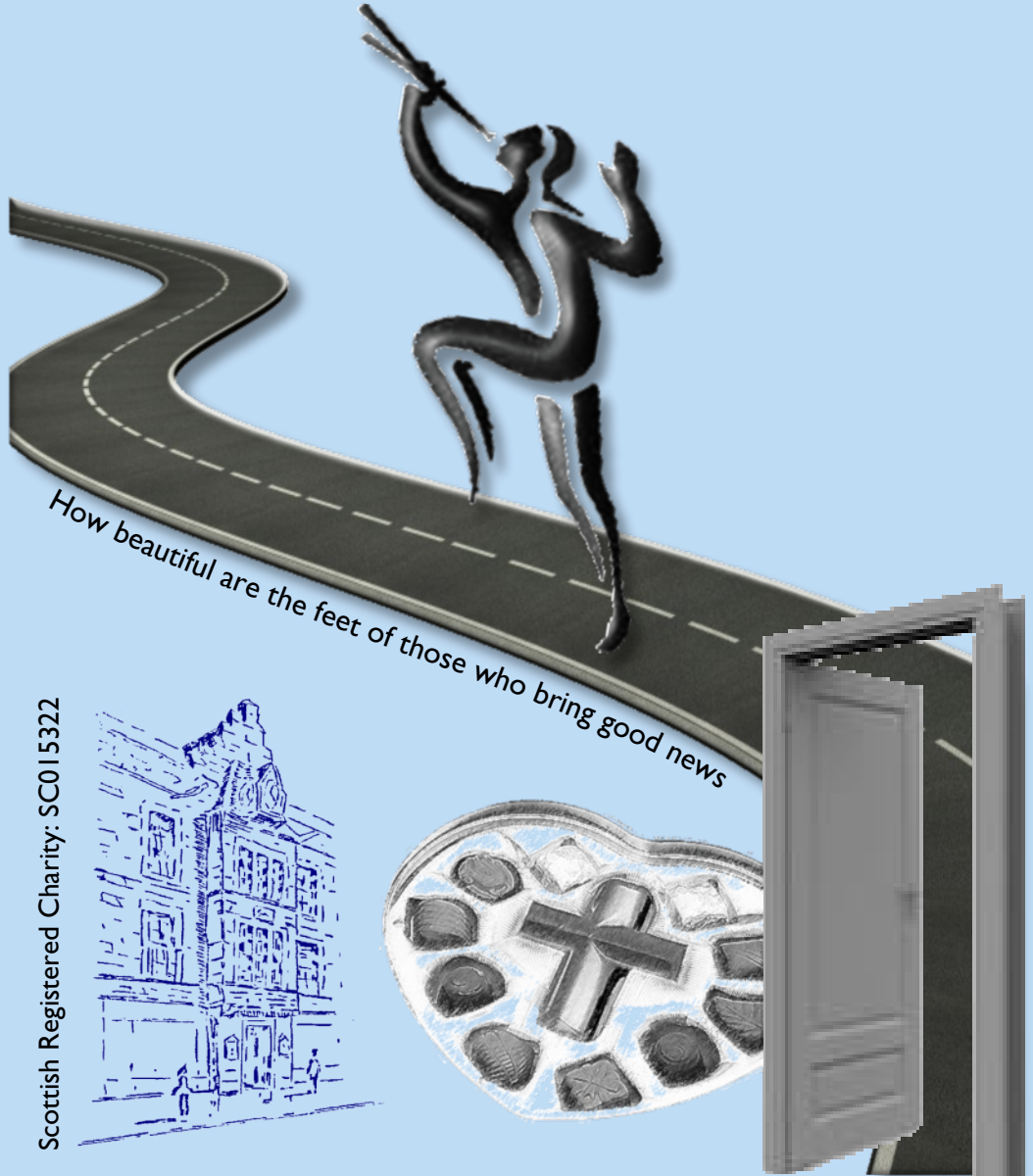


The magazine of Portobello Baptist Church

# MESSENGER

www.portobellobaptist.co.uk • February 2014



Scottish Registered Charity: SC015322

NEWS • TEACHING • ENCOURAGEMENT • LETTERS

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

	Tues	10.30 a.m.	Weekly Hour of Prayer [drop-in for all or part of the time]
	Wed	7.30 p.m.	Midweek Prayer & Bible Study
February	9th	Sun 2.00 p.m.	Management Meeting
	27th	Thurs 7.30 p.m.	Annual General Meeting
March	6th	Thurs 7.30 p.m.	Vision Action Group

## FUTURE SERMON PLAN

February	2nd	Speaker: Rev Bob Gemmell
	9th	– “Give me this mountain!” Joshua Ch 14
	16th	– “Honour your father and mother”
	23rd	– “Do not murder”
March	2nd	– “Do not commit adultery”
	9th	– “Do not steal”
	16th	– “Do not lie”
	23rd	– “Do not covet”
	30th	Speaker: Judy White (from BMS World Mission)

## SCOTTISH BAPTIST PRAYER LINK

February	2nd	Rev Carol Campbell: NHS Chaplaincy Inverclyde Bathgate, Bearsden & Bellshill
	9th	Rev John Craib: Chaplain HMP Lowmoss Bo’ness, Broomlands-Bourtreehill (Irvine) & Brae
	16th	Rev Philip Craven: Chaplain, Inverclyde Royal Hospital Bridge of Don, Bristo & Broughty Ferry
	23rd	Rev Anne Dougall: Chaplain, Glasgow West Hospitals Broxburn, Buckhaven & Buckie

## JANUARY OFFERING

£200.00 – January Cafe Day  
for *Bethany Christian Trust*



5th	£804.00	19th	£782.00
12th	£725.00	26th	£609.00

Building Fund total, so far :- £8,659.00

Dear brothers and sisters,

**Don't Judge ... Pray and BELIEVE!**

*"When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, He went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind Him at His feet weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know who is touching Him and what kind of woman she is -- that she is a sinner." (Luke 7:36-39)*

Someone once said "The Church is the only 'organisation' shaped for non-members". I wonder if you agree? Perhaps church has become different from the way you always remember it. It's good to know that this is not random, or change-for-change's-sake. We are shaping the church so that the not-yet-believers will understand the message and will feel at home in our faith community. That they may believe.

Russell Moore recounts a memorable conversation with the evangelical theologian Carl F. H. Henry. As Moore and some of his friends were lamenting the miserable shape of the church, they asked Dr. Henry if he saw any hope in the coming generation of evangelicals. Dr. Henry replied:

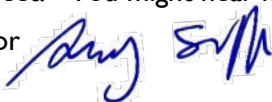
*"Of course, there is hope for the next generation of evangelicals. But the leaders of the next generation might not be coming from the current evangelical establishment. They are probably still pagans. Who knew that Saul of Tarsus was to be the great apostle to the Gentiles? Who knew that God would raise up a C. S. Lewis or a Charles Colson? They were unbelievers who, once saved by the grace of God, were mighty warriors for the faith.*

The future pastor of this church might be the kid from the high school you passed last week. You heard him swearing and might have thought how terrible that was. The future Sunday school teacher of this church might be one of the people you bump into coming out of the Portobello Bar as you leave church on a Sunday.

If we see people as "not-yet-Christians", then we might dare to believe that God has as much grace for them as he has needed to get you and me to this stage in our journey. Sometimes Jesus wants to comfort the afflicted, but watch out when he afflicts the comfortable. Ours is a mission for the life and death of human souls. This church will be shaped to make that mission most effective.

Jesus saw the sinful woman as an object of grace. She, and others like her, was the whole reason He came into this world. So pray for that young man the next time you pass him in the street. You might hear him preaching here one day.

Your Pastor



## THE CHURCH FAMILY

We continue to remember, in prayer, all those who have been so faithful in the service of the Church and are no longer able to worship with us:

- Jack & Thea Logan
- Ella Hill
- Olive Nicol
- Morna Vyse

## 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.

## FLOWER CALENDER

F 2nd  
E 9th  
B 16th  
R 23rd  
A  
R  
Y

If you would like to add your name to any blank space then please see either Allistair or Ewan



## THE OLYMPICS

Russia — Athletes and spectators from all over the world are converging on the Games. So are Christians from Russia and other parts of the world.



SOAR's Dick Page and AEC's Andrei Korenev provide an update on preparations for outreach.

The goal of most Christians is to do something more than win a gold medal. Greg Mangione with SOAR International Ministries says their team of about 40 people will be joining local churches in Sochi. The team will be “helping them man three different fun zones, or hospitality centres, that the churches will be hosting for the community at large there.”

The team will assist the local Church in introducing the community to Christ and who they are in Him. They'll do that through “Gospel magic shows, somebody making balloon animals and face paintings, and just a variety of activities and entertainment. The primary goal is to reach out to the people. We pray it'll be a beginning of a long-term relationship with the local Churches.”

Are there restrictions? “Yes,” says Mangione. “No street preaching. No proselytising out in the parks and all that. We want to try to create a relationship. We looking for people to ask, ‘Why are

you here?’ Hopefully that opens the door to share a personal testimony and to share, ‘I’m here because I love Christ.’”

Security issues have been on everyone’s minds at the Olympics. Mangione says, “Of course we’ll be taking appropriate precautions: staying in groups and not wandering too far from the main stream. I was there in Sochi in January and was pretty impressed with the level of security at that time.”



Mangione is asking you to pray that God will protect the team physically from sickness and other attacks. Pray also that God will begin working in the hearts of people who will be attending the hospitality centres.

(source: mnonline.org)

### THREE TIPS TO BETTER BIBLE READING

You probably don’t need to hear reasons that it’s important to read the Bible. You know it is.



But you might need some motivation. One way to get excited about reading the Bible is to rethink your Bible-reading strategy. Here are three tips for better Bible reading:

#### **Tip #1. Listen to audio-Bibles.**

When you listen to an audio-Bible, you’ll be surprised how quickly the time goes by and how much of the Bible you “read.”

Sometimes I listen while doing other tasks such as driving or cleaning or running, but I’ve found it to be incredibly profitable to listen while following along in a different English translation (or in the original languages). Listening to a different version than you are reading helps keep you engaged as you inquisitively consider various renderings. The pace is so fast that you miss all sorts of nuances, but you gain a valuable macro-perspective.

Audio-Bibles work well for the Bible’s many styles of literature, though they work best for stories as opposed to proverbs or letters. This is evident when listening to dramatized audio-Bibles (such as my family’s favourite: The Bible Experience). But it’s worth remembering that the congregations whom Paul addressed in his letters typically listened to Paul’s letters and did not own personal copies of them.

You might want to get started by downloading some free audio-Bibles from “Faith Comes by Hearing.”

#### **Tip #2. Read books of the Bible in one sitting.**

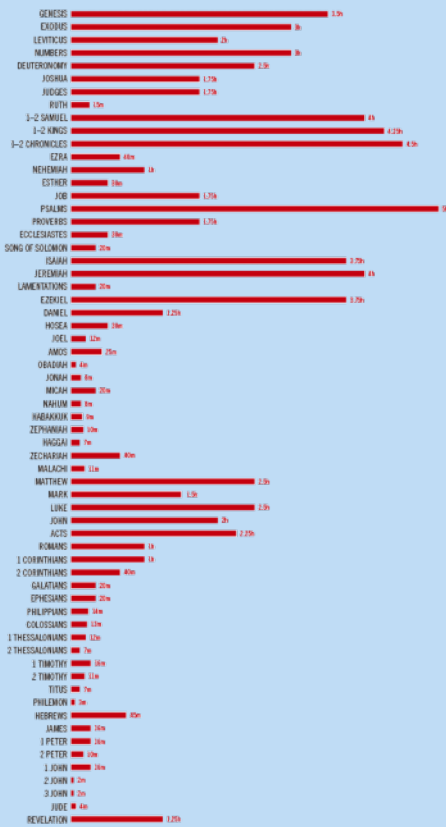
There is value in Bible-reading plans that divvy up the readings so that you read one chapter from four different books of the Bible. But if that’s the only way you read the Bible, it will be difficult to

understand key literary features and the theological message of whole books of the Bible.

Have you ever read the Gospel according to the Matthew straight through in one sitting? Or Romans? Or Job? Or Revelation? If not, you're missing out. That's the way they're meant to be read. A book like Nehemiah would generally take about one hour. Ephesians would take 20 minutes. Here's a full list of the approximate times it would take to read each book in our English Bible.

I understand the objection: "There's no way I could possibly find time to do this." But aren't there other activities you do in life for prolonged periods of time? Do you read other books for a few hours at a time?

Bible Reading Time



Do you ever spend an hour watching a TV show or two hours watching a movie or three hours watching a football game? Why not prioritise lengthy, undistracted time in the life-giving word?

**Tip #3.** Read without any chapter or verse references.

I am not a fan of chapter and verse references in the Bible. Bible “verses” didn’t even exist until about 1550, and “chapters” go back only to the 1200s. They can obscure the text and create artificial and sometimes inaccurate divisions.

Yes, chapter and verse references help us locate specific sentences and phrases quickly. But sometimes they do more harm than good. They lead many people to think of the Bible as a reference book that collects bullet-pointed verse-nuggets — not as the literature that it really is.

So how do you read the Bible without any chapter or verse references? There are at least three options:

Get a Bible without them. For example, Biblica has one called The Books of the Bible, and Crossway is planning to release the ESV Reader’s Bible in May.

Use a Bible software program like Logos to export a book or passage of Scripture to your favourite word processor without the chapter or verse numbers.

Manually delete the chapter and verse references in a word document on your computer. This is time-consuming, but you could copy-and-paste text from a site like Bible Gateway and then delete all the numbering. That’s more feasible for shorter books. Even better, Bible Gateway has an option to hide verse numbers (click on “Page Options”).

Take up and read (and listen) a lot.

(source: [desiringgod.org](http://desiringgod.org))