

The magazine of Portobello Baptist Church

MESSENGER

www.portobellobaptist.co.uk • December 2015

Discover Him this Christmas

*"Today in the town of David a
saviour has been born to you;
He is the Messiah, the Lord"*
Luke Ch 2 v 11



LET EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO,
LEAD OTHERS TO THE CROSS.

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring Good News

Scottish Registered Charity: SC0153322



NEWS • TEACHING • ENCOURAGEMENT • LETTERS

dates for your diary



December	Tues	10.30 a.m.	Weekly Hour of Prayer [drop-in for all or part of the time]
12th	Sun	1.30 p.m.	Management Meeting
18th	Fri	7.30 p.m.	Carols by Candlelight

[check 'Buzz' newsheet for last minute details]

SCOTTISH BAPTIST PRAYER LINK

December	6th	Stonehaven Baptist Church Stranraer Baptist Church
	13th	Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church Thurso Baptist Church; Tillicoultry Baptist Church Tiree Baptist Church
	20th	Uddingston Baptist Church; Viewfield Baptist Church; Westray Baptist Church Westwood Baptist Church
	27th	Whyte's Causeway Baptist Church Wick Baptist Church; Wigtown Baptist Church Wishaw Baptist Church

FUTURE SERMON PLAN

December	6th	All I want for Christmas is – Luke 1:68-79 – Beat the holiday blues
	13th	I wish every day could be Christmas
	20th	Strength Security Peace Micah 5:4-5
	27th	To infinity and beyond

NOVEMBER OFFERING



1st	£731.00	15th	£586.00	29th	£362.00
8th	£739.00	22nd	£630.00		

Building Fund, running total :- £28,614.11

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*"But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law,
that we might receive adoption to sonship."
(Galatians ch 4 v 4 -- 5)*

A Saviour had been promised to God's people for centuries. They longed and prayed for rescue. And then on the right day, in the right place, at the right time, Jesus was born. While God rarely comes at our appointed time, He always comes at the right time.

All of us are waiting on something, often wondering if God has forgotten us. In your waiting, let the birth of Christ encourage you. Just because God hasn't come through (as far as you can see), it doesn't mean He has abandoned you. To Him a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. This very minute He's working for His glory and for your good. Though circumstances say otherwise, God is going to come through, on schedule, fulfilling His long-appointed plans for you. Don't give up before the time is right.

Take hope in the manger and know that you are loved and prized by the God who stepped down from heaven and arrived at the perfect time for you.

Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
The Saviour promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne,
And ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'ns eternal arches ring
With Thy beloved name.

PRAYER

Father, meet me in the waiting, the place where I long for what is not fully in view. Still my heart and give me the ability to know that You are near. I believe Your plans are good. I see it in the birth of Your only Son.

But sometimes I struggle to see beyond the haze that surrounds me. Renew my confidence as I lift my eyes to You. Be glorified in my life during this season of expectation. Amen.

Your pastor,



Merry Christmas

THE CHURCH FAMILY

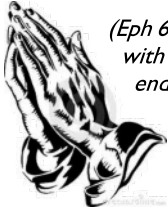
We continue to remember, in prayer, all those who have been so faithful in the service of the Church and are no longer able to worship with us:

- Ella Hill
- Olive Nicol
- Betty Ward

PRAYING FOR THE FLOCK

(1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 6.4)

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.



(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"

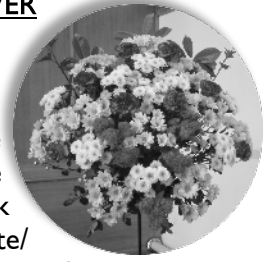
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D 6th
E 13th
C 15th
E 20th
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FLOWER CALENDAR 2015

CHURCH FLOWER CALENDAR



The Church Flowers in the sanctuary are provided each week to commemorate/honour a date of special family significance.

After the service they are given to anyone known to the Church family who may need encouragement, be suffering from ill-health or affected by bereavement.

If you would like to have your name included in the 2016 calendar then please speak to me and I will add your name into the relevant space.

(Ewan Sinclair)



SITONGUA & LYNNE LAUSSU

Prayer letter,
November 2015

Dear Friends,

It's a little while since you heard from us and a lot has happened over the last few months. Thank you so much for journeying with us as we live and learn in a different context. One of the aspects Sitongua has been learning about is the role of the Imam.



An Imam is the man who leads prayers in a mosque; for Muslims an Imam is a recognised authority on Islamic theology and law and a spiritual guide.

Friendships with Imams matter for two particular reasons: i) that of relationship,

being accepted in the community; ii) that of reference and testimonial, and acquisition of reliable information.

Any initiative in the community is filtered through the eyes of these traditional leaders. They can approve or disapprove of works or programmes. It is of paramount importance that one gives due respect to these people. They are very good at explaining what the real needs are in a particular area.

Sitongua has been doing well in building up relationships with Imams and has engaged in interesting conversations with them. In August he was invited to visit the home village of one of Labe's Imams and this proved extremely fruitful in terms of consolidated friendships and learning about the area. While he is at the stage of learning Pulaar, it was great to see the joyous faces of the villagers on hearing a foreigner greeting them in their local language. He was highly honoured to be given a live chicken to "take-away" for tea.

One of the areas we see a need is with education. Many children learn through informal apprenticeships in wood, metal, mechanic and tailoring workshops. It's normal for them to start work as early as six years of age and formal education takes a back seat. Recently, we met a 10 year old boy who could make a very beautiful bed but could not write his name for a receipt. While it's a gift to be able to make such beautiful furniture, business would go better with basic literacy and numeracy skills.

It was great to be able to participate in a conference for early years' education. It

took place in Forecariah, south of Conakry, where the population is quite mixed in terms of faith, and both Muslims and Christians took part. There was awareness raising concerning the need to educate pre-schoolers, adult literacy and need for teacher training programmes.

While classes stopped at the University of Labe, students were busy preparing for their graduation ceremony and Sitongua attended the event. Suleiman, a student he has been friends with, received his diploma joyfully. The hall was typically decorated with local colours of the national flag and the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement and the presence of many family members who travelled long distances to be there. The diplomas were handed over with lots of loud cheers, dancing and applause, and no-one bothered that the event started three hours later than advertised in the invitation cards.

Inasmuch as studies are a catapult to better prospects, most of these graduates now face the big challenge of finding their first employment. Suleiman is heading to the capital where he has family and hopes new avenues will be open for him.

Thank you for praying for the elections. There has been some turmoil surrounding the results, but all went fairly peacefully. The president is back for a second term, and one of his promises during this mandate is to provide more employment. This will be difficult, especially because of the economic situation, not just in the country but in the world.

Thankfully the campaign to stop Ebola has been proving effective, especially with the introduction of the vaccine, communities

are feeling safer and there is a great reduction in the number of cases.

So there is lots to praise and thank God for and continue to pray for in Guinea. However, there has been an unexpected interruption in our work there. Lynne had to return to the UK for medical reasons, first diagnosis and now some months of treatment. We are grateful for your prayers at this time, that treatment would go well and she can return soon to the work God has called us to. Sitongua has recently been able to join her in the UK.

We thank God for the experiences in Guinea so far.

Praise God:

- That good relationships have been established in lots of different areas.
- For the relatively peaceful elections.
- An end to the Ebola crisis seems in sight.

Please pray:

- For the children that they will have access to education.
- For the students who just graduated that they will have jobs and venture to further studies.
- For the friends we established that the conversations we had about faith will resonate in their hearts and minds.

Lynne & Sitongua



THE FORGOTTEN MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS

by Jay Younts (shepherdpress.com)

The coming of Christ has greater significance than we can possibly imagine. Often lost in the Christmas rush is the comfort the coming of Christ means for mankind and for creation itself. His coming makes all things right. You can know comfort in the face of injustice.

But also look at the message that Psalm 98 and Romans 8 reveal about creation. The groaning creation rejoices at the coming of its King. Without his coming, sin would so corrupt the Earth that it would collapse under its ugly weight. The rivers and hills are not rejoicing in a vacuum. The creation knows that Christ is their salvation. Sin's toxic curse is broken.

For God's people this means comfort is possible. God does make all things right. Yes, you should celebrate this Christmas! But also you can rest. Your God has made a way for you, a way of comfort. Your sin is paid for. You are redeemed!

Isaiah Ch 40 vv 1-2

*Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.*

*Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received
from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.*

THE PRINCE OF PEACE HAS COME!

by Jay Younts (shepherdpress.com)

Christmas marks the beginning of the end.
The end of:

War,
Greed,
Selfishness,
Bigotry,
Racism,
Oppression,
Immorality,
Secularism,
Corrupt leaders,
Abuse,
Addiction,
Anger,
Despair,
Hatred,
Sadness,
Suffering,
Heartbreak.

Someone is saying, "Wait a minute!
Haven't you seen the news. Haven't you
seen the suffering of people all around
you?"

Yes, I have. But there is news that is
better than what is on the cable, network
or internet or what my eyes have seen.

It was announced in the heavens 2,000
years ago. The items on this list have
been defeated by Jesus Christ. They will
all come to an end.

The good news is that Christ has come!
He makes certain the promise that one
day there will be no more tears.

Jesus Christ is waging a righteous war for
the lives of his people. Heaven has been
secured. The victory is won!

Isaiah Ch 9 vv 6-7

*For a child is born to us,
a son is given to us.*

*The government will rest
on His shoulders.*

And He will be called:

*Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*His government and its peace
will never end.*

*He will rule with fairness and justice
from the throne of His ancestor David
for all eternity.*

*The passionate commitment of the
Lord of Heaven's Armies
will make this happen!*



GLORIA DEO!

(Text by Chris Anderson; Tune by Joey Hoelscher)

Gloria Deo! The Savior is come;
Born to a virgin is God's holy Son.
David's Awaited will sit on his throne,
Ruling the nations; His praises make known.

Refrain

*"Gloria! Gloria!" Shout of His birth!
God the Creator descends to the earth!
Born in the squalor to cleanse us from sin;
Glory to God for the Savior of men!
Glory to God for the Savior of men!*

Gloria Deo! The shepherds behold
Angels announce what the prophets foretold:
"Born is the Savior, the Master of all!
Swaddled Messiah lies hushed in a stall."

Gloria Deo! Sin's power is dead.
Jesus, though bruised, crushed the serpent's foul head!
Seed of the woman, Redeemer of men,
Vanquishes Satan! We sing out again—

Gloria Deo! The sinner may live!
Joyous the news heaven's messengers give.
Peace to the fallen but favored Christ brings.
"Glory to God!" let the church loudly sing!

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VISITOR RESPONSE

I am a visitor and would like

- Information about the Church
- A visit from the Minister
- Information about becoming a Christian

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE



PLEASE FILL IN YOUR CONTACT DETAILS BELOW
and either place in the offering bag, hand to a steward or post to
189 Portobello High Street, Portobello, Edinburgh, EH15 1EU

NAME:
EMAIL:

PHONE: