

The magazine of Portobello Baptist Church

# MESSENGER

www.portobellobaptist.co.uk • January 2016

# 2016

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The old has gone, the new has come ...

(II Corinthians 5:17)

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

2015



January  
 Tues 10.30 a.m. Weekly Hour of Prayer  
 [drop-in for all or part of the time]  
 12<sup>th</sup> Tues 7.30 p.m. Management Meeting

[check 'Buzz' newsheet for last minute details]

## SCOTTISH BAPTIST PRAYER LINK

January 3<sup>rd</sup> Abbeyhill Baptist Church  
 10<sup>th</sup> Airdrie Baptist Church  
 17<sup>th</sup> Alness Baptist Church  
 24<sup>th</sup> Arran Baptist Church  
 31<sup>st</sup> Bearsden Baptist Church

## FUTURE SERMON PLAN

January 3<sup>rd</sup> THE BEST IS YET TO COME – HEBREWS 10  
 Hebrews 10:19-31 – How good are you at drawing?  
 10<sup>th</sup> Hebrews 10:32-35 – Let the future touch your past  
 17<sup>th</sup> Hebrews 10:35-38 – Keep on keeping on  
 24<sup>th</sup> Hebrews 10:39 – Where do you belong  
 31<sup>st</sup> THE APPRENTICE – I TIMOTHY  
 I Timothy 1 – Job description  
 February 7<sup>th</sup> I Timothy 2 – A team player

## DECEMBER OFFERING



6 <sup>th</sup>	£787.00	20 <sup>th</sup>	£517.50
13 <sup>th</sup>	£917.00	27 <sup>th</sup>	£610.50

Building Fund, running total :- £34,465.43  
 Carols by Candlelight for Bethany CT :- £261.00



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

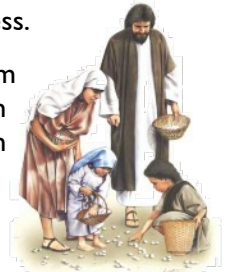
“See, I am doing a new thing!.”  
*(Isaiah ch 43 v 19 NIV)*

Because of Christmas, we all end the year with new things—new toys for the kids, new clothes. We start the year off with new things, too—a new calendar on the wall, new bills to pay, and new resolutions for the days ahead.

Everybody likes new things, including God. He says, “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” God begins His book with the story of His creating a new world; He ends it with His plans to make a new heaven and new earth.

Our heavenly Father wants to do new things in the lives of His children. He desires to teach us new truths about Himself, provide new opportunities for serving others, take us to higher levels of worship and deeper levels of trust. But too often we’re like the Israelites when they were travelling in the wilderness.

God promised to provide for them by raining down bread from heaven six days a week. He instructed them to gather only enough manna for each day, except for the day before the Sabbath when they were allowed to store up two days’ worth. When some of the people disobeyed and tried to hoard extra manna, it became rotten and full of worms by the next morning.



We’re like that sometimes. God wants to do new, fresh things in our lives, but often we try to hold on to yesterday’s stale manna. I don’t want to let go of what is comfortable and familiar—some old way of thinking, a certain way of doing things, my usual area of service to Him. I may miss new and exciting things God has planned for me if I don’t fully trust His guidance, even when He seems to be leading me down unfamiliar paths.

Look out for God’s new thing happening in your life this year.

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:

### 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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### FLOWER CALENDAR 2016

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3<sup>rd</sup>  
10<sup>th</sup>  
17<sup>th</sup>  
24<sup>th</sup>  
31<sup>st</sup>

## 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)

### TRIBUTE TO MISS ELLA HILL

It is a privilege for me to write this tribute to Ella Hill who passed into the presence of her Lord on December 10 2015.

Ella came to live in a care home in Portobello a good number of years ago. But unforeseen circumstances lead her to be in three care homes in the area before she managed to get settled in Ellen's Glen House Hospital where she stayed for several years.

Before coming to Portobello Ella lived in another part of the town and attended Bristo Baptist Church. She was a



good friend of Miss Winnie Hadden and probably through her started coming to the fellowship here. She did not come into membership but

fully supported the church both in her giving and in prayer.

Ella had a strong faith and was a woman of prayer. When she was able she regularly attended the Wednesday evening prayer meeting and in more recent times the Tuesday morning prayer group. Unfortunately, her health prevented her from getting to church as much as she would have liked, but she never lost her interest in it.

### TRIBUTE TO MRS JANET BROCKIE

It was with sadness that the church family heard of the death of Jane Penman's sister, Janet, on December 26 2015.

Some of the fellowship knew Janet in her younger days in the church along with Jane and her brother John. After her marriage to David Brockie she moved to the south side of Edinburgh and Morningside Baptist Church eventually became her spiritual home.

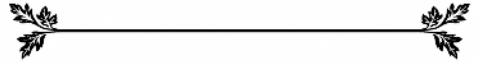
A few years ago Janet returned to the Portobello fellowship and came along with Jane to the morning services. She was very faithful in her attendance until illness prevented her being able to come.

Janet has now entered into her rest. Her frailty is over and she is now in the nearer presence of her Lord whom she loved.

To her son, Gerald, and his family and to Jane, John & Heather and all those who mourn her passing we extend our love, sympathy and prayers at this sad time.

Janet's funeral will take place at Mortonhall Crematorium on Friday 15 January at 11.30 a.m.

(Winnie Beattie)



### WHAT WILL YOU LIVE FOR IN 2016

by Jay Younts, [www.shepherdspress.com](http://www.shepherdspress.com)

Every December 31st, we become time conscious. But time is slippery, temporary. What will our time be like this next year? News shows, books, internet articles, friends tell us there is much to worry about in 2016: terrorists, the elections, the economy, the climate, social unrest. We are told any one of these things may impact the quality of life and how long we may live.

But as Paul says, don't focus on what is temporary, but focus on eternity. Faith has to do with eternity. This means that faith is rooted not in time and what happens in time. Faith is rooted in the person and character of God!

Faith  
is not hoping  
God can  
it is knowing  
He Will

Faith is not primarily about everything working out. Faith is about knowing and

pursuing the person of God. So Jesus says to seek first His kingdom and righteousness, the things that are connected to the character of God.

Those things that are not tied to the pursuit of God, like tomorrow, Jesus says not to worry about them. Even though the experts and pundits don't acknowledge it, God is in ultimate control. In this sense tomorrow and the 24/7 news cycle is not important. Don't make 2016 the year of worry.

The pursuit of God's character, His goodness, His rule in your heart, those are things that go beyond time. Those are the things that matter.

Seek the things that are related to God's kingdom, those things in this life which are connected to what is eternal. Is your spouse secure in your commitment to her or him and to God? Do you value your children as people to invest in or are you more invested in the things that are temporary? In other words are you trusting things that are temporary to let your family know how much you care about them? Relationships have to do with more than what is temporary, they have to do with God and His eternal character.

Don't measure your life and your children's lives by the pursuit of the things that are temporary.

You cannot change how long you live.  
You can change what you live for!

## WITH GENTLENESS & RESPECT

by Burk Parsons

When people first hear the word apologetics, they typically think of our modern use of the word apology. They often conclude that the task of apologetics

is apologizing for the Christian faith as if to say we are sorry for our faith. However, the word apologetics derives from the Greek word apologia, which means "to give an answer" or "to make a defence." Apologetics is not an apology, it's an answer—a defence of what we believe. In his first epistle, Peter writes, "In your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15). In his commentary on 1 Peter, Dr. R.C. Sproul writes:

*Our preparation is to make us ready to give a defence and a reason for the hope that is in us . . . . If your neighbour says, "I notice that you are a Christian. What is it that you believe?" are you ready to explain not only what you believe but why you believe it? Some Christians tell those who inquire that we simply take a leap of faith with no bother about the credibility or the rational character of the truth claims of the Bible, but that response goes against the teaching of this text. The only leap of faith we are to take is out of the darkness and into the light. When we become Christians, we do not leave our mind in the parking lot. We are called to think according to the Word of God, to seek the mind of Christ and an understanding of the things set forth in sacred Scripture.*

God calls us to be ready to make a defence for the hope that is in us, but notice that He calls us to do it with gentleness and respect. Apologetics isn't just for some Christians, it is for all Christians. We all must know what we believe, why we believe it, how to live it, how to defend it, and how to proclaim it—and we must do so with gentleness and respect.



## WE ARE GETTING CLOSER

by Erik Raymond, [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org)

As we flip the calendar and look ahead we as Christians are reminded of this great truth: we are closer.

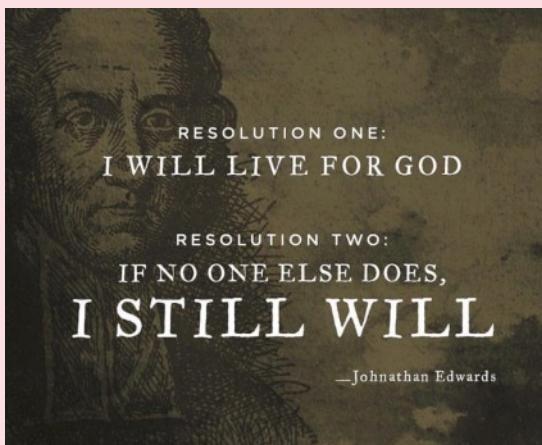
We are closer to faith becoming sight and the day when we will walk in Immanuel's land. Think about this truth: with the turn of the calendar from 2015 to 2016 we are that much closer to dwelling in the everlasting kingdom of Christ!

All of the longing for full-undiluted joy will be met. All of the temptations to sin will be removed. All of the pain over fractured relationships will be healed. All of the tears over lost loved ones will be wiped. All of the lurking shadows of the evil one will be vanquished. All of the false teaching will be muzzled. All of the division in the body of Christ will be sorted out. All of the flesh will be mortified. There will be no more fleeting moments of joy but rather we

will be enveloped in the experience of what is now mysteriously called inexpressible joy! We will no longer fear but trust perfectly. We won't be bitter but rejoice wholeheartedly. The flickering flames of guilt, shame, insecurity, lament, and doubt will be extinguished in the ocean of Christ's infinite merit. The doctrinal realities will become our daily experiences. The longing will be met with lasting joy. We will in fact be there.

I can't wait to walk with my brothers and sisters in Immanuel's land with faces made radiant by the Holy Spirit. As I turn the calendar I do so with longing; and the daily weights of life in this flesh only serve to increase it.

But, there is good news! In 2016 we are that much closer to walking in Immanuel's land. May it be soon!



# Grace Gems!

## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

(by Matthew Henry)

*"My times are in Your hand!"*

Psalm 31:15

Firmly believing that **our** times are in God's hand, **we** here submit **ourselves** and all **our** affairs for the ensuing year, to the wise and gracious disposal of God's divine providence. Whether God appoints for **us** . . . .

- health or sickness,
- peace or trouble,
- comforts or crosses,
- life or death--

may His holy will be done!

All **our** time, strength, and service, **we** devote to the honour of the Lord Jesus--and even **our** common actions. It is **our** earnest expectation, hope, and desire, **our** constant aim and endeavour--that Jesus Christ may be magnified in **us**.

In everything **we** have to do--**our** entire dependence is upon Jesus Christ for strength. And whatever **we** do in word or deed, **we** desire to do all in His name,

### VISITOR RESPONSE

I am a visitor and would like .....

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

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:

to make Him **our** Alpha and Omega. **We** *have* all from Him--and **we** would *use* all for Him.

If this should prove a year of *affliction*, a *sorrowful* year to **us**--**we** will fetch all **our** supports and comforts from the Lord Jesus and stay **ourselves** upon Him, His everlasting consolations, and the good hope **we** have in Him through grace.

And if it should be my *dying* year--then **our** *times are in the hand of the Lord Jesus*. And with a humble reliance upon His mediation, **we** would venture into the eternal world looking for the blessed hope. Dying as well as living--Jesus Christ will, **we** trust, be gain and advantage to **us**.

Oh, that the grace of God may be sufficient for **us**, to keep **us** always a humble sense of **our** own unworthiness, weakness, folly, and infirmity--together with a humble dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ for both righteousness and strength.



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CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

