

Burnside Blairbeth Church



Contact

No 166

Christmas 2023

Dear friends,

I have no doubt that at some point this Christmas you will hear the words -

*“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests”
(Luke 2;14).*



or some other wording of the angels’ greetings to the shepherds. And then you might wonder – as we think about the current tragic events in the land of Jesus’ birth – where is this peace the angels proclaimed?

You’re less likely to hear another Christmas text from the same chapter of Luke. This took place in the temple when Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus for circumcision and Simeon, who had waited expectantly for the Messiah said to Mary –

“This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” (Luke 2;34-35).

We like the sweet Christmas promises of peace, good will etc, but this also seems to promise something different. Jesus reiterated this when He said –

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” (Matthew 10;34).

Jesus did not come to bring violence, but it is clear that He promised conflict. When we pause for a moment, we realise that every peacemaker who has ever lived has also brought conflict. People like Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and many more were not universally lauded as they sought justice and peace.

He causes conflict among people. In its early days Christianity grew in a Roman society which had multiple gods. The understanding was that you could worship whoever or whatever you liked privately, but you would also worship the emperor. Christians didn't go along with this consensus – they proclaimed that Jesus wasn't merely a god – He was **the** God and so they were persecuted for their intolerance. In the west we don't experience that persecution, but the perception of intolerance might be familiar. See how Jesus causes conflict!

Or it may be a work or family situation where you find yourself at odds with something which you know you just can't do. You ask yourself the question "what would Jesus do?" and the answer comes back unequivocally "not this!" You become the person who causes awkwardness, and the comfortable status quo is disturbed. See how Jesus causes conflict!

We rightly often note that Jesus brings inner peace, but He also brings inner conflict. Internal battles rage, as pragmatism dictates one course of action in a particular situation, while our conscience, transformed by the Holy Spirit dictates another. See how Jesus causes conflict!

Then there's the uncomfortable reality of repentance. Tim Keller describes repentance as being like an antiseptic. It stings when poured into a wound, but it also brings healing. Ultimately repentance brings peace but that peace is only attained because we're willing to go through the inner turmoil involved in repentance – after all none of us

are comfortable being confronted by truths we'd rather not face. See how Jesus causes conflict!

Jesus promised us peace and He promised trouble. At first sight those seem incompatible, but I hope by now you're seeing how they can fit together. In fact, to experience the experience that peace that only Jesus can bring, you will experience conflict. As you face up to whatever conflict may be necessary there is one other promise that we need to hold on to:

*"Surely, I am with you always to the end of the age."
(Matthew 28;20)*

May you know the peace of Jesus this Christmas, and may you know His presence with you whatever conflict you face.

Your friend and minister,

William

Christmas Services 2023

❖ Sunday 10th December - Quiet Christmas

3pm A service for everyone, particularly if 2023 has been a hard year for you. Afternoon tea will be served following the service.

❖ Sunday 24th December - Christmas Eve

10.30am All Age Christmas Service

6pm Christmas eve service especially suitable for families with children - make a Christingle!

8pm Traditional Carol Service

❖ Monday 25th December – Christmas Day

10.30am Christmas Morning Service
Children can bring along a Christmas gift



Kirk Session – October

The meeting opened with a time of prayer and discussion together. Part of this was looking at the work done on the prayer manifesto. Elders discussed this in groups, then spent time praying for a variety of areas of church life, and also for wider local and international issues.

Worship and Prayer

There were discussions about Christmas Services (which will be listed in this issue of Contact) as well as deciding to deliver Christmas cards to our Parish once again. Anyone who would like to volunteer to deliver some should contact Lesley Mackintosh.

The Kirk Session

There were a number of areas discussed here including receiving the Safeguarding report as well as an opportunity to hear more about the strategy day.

Pastoral Care

Kate gave an update on various areas relating to this part of our church life. She updated Elders on the prayer meeting that is now taking place on the second Tuesday of each month, in the morning. She also talked about the need for more people to be involved in bringing people to church on a Sunday morning. If you would like to find out more about this, please speak to Kate. There is also the plan to distribute our Christmas gift bags once again. Kate is the person to speak to if you would like to be involved in this.

Presbytery Plan Update

Our appeal has progressed to the next stage and we await more information.

Communication

Lesley spent some time helping us to familiarise ourselves even more with Church Suite. She stressed the control that individuals have over their own information and it was positive to see how much simpler the system could make organising rotas and events. If you would like to find out more about how to use the app, just ask!

Finance

Andrew Telfer had produced detailed work on this area of out church life. He updated Elders on the current financial situation as well as the Gift and Pledge Day – this is something he has updated the Congregation about too. Concerns particularly include the doubling of our gas and electricity costs in the coming year.

Property

There was an update on the handrail and fence – something that some of the Giving Day money is to go towards. This is progressing but we await quotes.

Blairbeth Building -there had been an inspection of the building and a report sent back to Presbytery.

AOCB

Chris Mackintosh updated Elders on the recent Presbytery meeting he had attended. He also showed Elders the '10 of Those' website which can be used to order books that might be helpful for small group study amongst other areas.

The next Kirk Session meeting is 6th December, with Communion on 10th December.

There are a number of areas of church life that need your support and involvement. Some of these are in practical ways, as highlighted above, however, some of them involve praying for specific areas of our church

life. You may not be able to deliver Christmas gift bags, but you would be able to pray that the volunteers do come forward. Please get in touch with any of the people mentioned or Leigh or Gary, if you want to find out more – we would love to have your support so that even more people hear of Jesus love, and feel well supported by their church.

We have included key points but if there is anything else that you would like to speak to us about, please email us –

sessionclerk@burnsideblairbeth.church

Leigh Galloway and Gary Wylie
Joint Session Clerks

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Winter Clothes

Rutherglen Rotary Club have thanked us for all the donations of Winter jackets and clothing for homeless and needy people in Glasgow. Over 800 items were collected and will be shared out between:

- Glasgow Street Pastors
- Kindness Charity
- Lodging House Mission
- Salvation Army – Govan
- Salvation Army – Rutherglen
- Simon Community Hub

Leigh Galloway

Burnside Blairbeth Guild



"New Wine, New Wineskins"

Our meeting on 30th October was very well attended and our speaker Rev. Gordon Armstrong gave us a very detailed and, at times, moving account of his experiences as chaplain to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

On November 13th we welcomed Robert Alexander from the Vine Trust Scotland. In this project they will be building and supporting Kazunzu, a village on the shores of Lake Tanzania. Having already built homes there, the project will go beyond that with more homes, employment and training, schools and other community buildings. This is one of the projects being supported by the National Guild.

We look forward to:

Saturday 25 th November	Christmas Fayre in the Burnside Church Hall.
Monday 27 th November	A Life in Scouting. Graeme Hamilton M B E
Monday 11 th December	Christmas Flowers. Anne Scott
Monday 18 th December	Christmas Lunch at the Burnside Hotel

We were saddened to learn of the death of our friend Elizabeth Cherrie. Elizabeth was a loyal and faithful member of both our church and Guild. She enjoyed our meetings and attended regularly. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends at this time sad time.

Jean Goldie



Firstly, thank you for the variety of ways in which you have engaged with and contributed to the Q&A process started on Sunday 29th October, to help focus our work, particularly that of Andy and Kate. There's plenty to think about and meanwhile here are some of the key responses.

Sunday mornings at Church. There were many ideas about how to develop further Sunday mornings as well as a few concerns. We should focus on small shifts on the welcome, the ways in which we all learn together and how we can function more as a family of believers.

Food. There was a strong streak of ideas about eating together, whether in our own homes with others, as part of Messy Church, as lunches together, men's breakfast, or church holiday. We know that getting together over food is an important part of family life, is something Jesus did frequently and is appreciated by us when it happens!

Small groups. Contributions recognised the benefits and the difficulties of getting to them. We do tend to get on well in smaller groups, so it isn't surprising that they are a place of significant fellowship and discipling.

Prayer. Prayer was mentioned frequently, including as a fundamental to any progress, something we all have problems with and as something that we should be doing more of in a congregational way. We have already started concentrating on prayer and expect more to come.

Frontlines. "Frontlines" are where we interact with others who do not have an active Christian faith, whether at work, at play and in living.

Being a witness or evangelist can be thought of as scary, and we need help and support with it. Similarly, we as individuals need to be involved with people and organisations outwith the church family to develop our frontlines.

Thank you again for all your input. We are still looking for more using this form or by any other means.

<https://www.burnsideblairbeth.church/admin/resources/the-vision-3-0.pdf>

What was very encouraging in the majority of responses was your obvious commitment to becoming a family of more passionate, whole-hearted followers of Jesus who are more confident in displaying Christ to the world around us.

Chris Mackintosh

The team involved is Jen Robertson, Andy MacArthur, Irene Craigie, Leigh Galloway, Ailsa Holroyd and Kate Airlie.



The Well – Grand Opening!

While The Well has been up and running in its new premises at 53 Niddrie Road in Govanhill since April of this year, the official opening only took place on 24th October. It was a splendid occasion at which



The Lord Provost, Jacqueline McLaren, performed the opening ceremony and unveiled a plaque to record the occasion.

There were various speeches. The Lord Provost paid tribute to the work The Well does and spoke of how much it is appreciated by the city. One of those who has been much helped by the advice and support of The Well spoke about the difference it had made to his own life.

William, our minister, who chairs the Board, reflected on God's provision of the new building after a long number of years of waiting. In fact, the Board of The Well had taken the step of faith of not renewing the lease of the previous building and that only emphasised how good God had been and how perfect his timing was so that The Well was not left 'homeless'. The Moderator of Glasgow



Presbytery spoke about how valuable the work was and prayed for the ongoing work.

The formalities were followed by a splendid buffet lunch when Rhoda, the Manager, the staff, volunteers old and new, Board members and many friends enjoyed a time of fellowship, and catching up.

The Well always needs more volunteers to help with providing advice to a constant stream of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. If you would like to find out more about volunteering and what's involved please do speak to William or to Alan Thomson.



Alan Thomson

News from Morven, New Destiny Farm, Brazil

New Destiny as it was meant to be ...

At the start of last year the farm felt so empty and sad. It was just after Covid and the Transformers groups hadn't yet started up again. What a complete contrast to this summer, with children everywhere and the sound of happy playing - New Destiny as it was meant to be!



What a difference a weekend makes ...

Despite doing this work for nearly 20 years, I felt just as emotional as the first time, as we watched yet another bus making its way up the drive one Friday night in July, full of city kids who were about to have the time of their lives!

Back in the slum their homes are over-crowded and squalid, their beds are often shared with brothers and sisters, and their mattresses flea-infested and damp. Most have fathers, uncles and brothers who are heavily involved in the drug scene. Abuse and neglect are the norm. The neighbourhood is violent and noisy and the atmosphere is always tense. Drug dealing and gang activity are around every corner and brutal police raids can happen at any time. The farm is like a little piece of paradise, away from all that, a place full of love, peace and innocent fun, a place where the hope of another new destiny, even more amazing and beautiful than this one, is unlocked in their hearts.

For some of these kids, knowing they can come back to New Destiny again next year is a big enough incentive to keep them at school or stop them going into drugs.

On the Sunday afternoon, as they watched the best moments from the weekend in the camp film, some smiled and laughed the whole way through and others, like me, were choking back the tears. Then we all joined hands in one big circle for a final prayer, committing these precious young folk into the Lord's hands ... and we still pray for them and for all the many others who have opened their hearts to Jesus at ND throughout the years, in confidence that 'He who began a good work in them will carry it on to completion until Jesus returns.'

Why Transformers is such a lifeline – Kevilyn

Kevilyn, 10, lives with her mum, gran, and great gran, who are all crack addicts and dealers. Social services have been involved with the family for years, Kevilyn's mum has already had children taken away from her by social services, but despite us



reporting Kevilyn's situation several times, so far she still seems to be slipping through the net. Thank God she has New Destiny in her life.

Kevilyn's uncle **RICHARD**, was one of our TF lads from a few years back. Richard was a prime target for the drug dealers but through the work at

New Destiny, he gave his life to Jesus instead and has stayed clean. He spent about a year with us on the farm when he was 18, helping in maintenance, and now he lives about an hour away with his wife and two little children and is managing to hold down a full-time job.

Amazing Alpha

On the last night of Women's Alpha 15 women shared personal testimonies of how their lives have changed through this recent course. Here is Debora's story: "I had been asking God to reveal himself to me and he did ... my husband and I were about to separate, but during the course, my marriage turned around. We don't want to split up now. We're happy. My two daughters have also changed since they started coming to New Destiny. They are not ashamed and withdrawn anymore, they are more confident and much happier ... this is the first time I have felt accepted for who I am in a church."

It was particularly moving to watch Margareth leading the Alpha course as I remembered back to when she and her then long-term partner, Vanderley, became Christians on the first one we ever ran at ND, nearly 10 years ago! During the course, Vanderley asked Margareth to marry him, after living together for 15 years, and they got married on the farm!

Shortly after selling their bar in the slum, they moved onto the farm with their family and Margareth joined the New Destiny team. She helped me to start TransformUMs in 2015 and for the last few years has headed up all the family work as well as working with the children and teenagers. What a blessing she is!

We have recently finished a **Youth Alpha** course for 12 older teenagers (TF+ kids). Please pray for the young folk.

Love always protects, always trust, always hopes, always perseveres

We continue to have regular contact with many of our older kids in the New Destiny family. Some of them have children of their own now! Even if it takes a lifetime, God is working in all of our New Destiny kids. We just need to keep believing that nothing is impossible for Him and never give up on them! Transformation can take a while but along the way God gives us glimpses of His glory that encourage us to keep going and that it will all be worth it in the end!

You in all of this ...

We couldn't do it without you, and we are so grateful for your vital part in the New Destiny story. Thank you especially for your faithful prayers and support/donations for the work.

God bless you all!

Morven Collington & the New Destiny team

Blythwood Care Christmas

Shoebox Appeal

Thank you to everyone who supported the shoebox appeal again this year. Kay and I took 70 boxes to the Blythwood warehouse where they will be checked over before being sent to Eastern Europe.

Also, thank you for the extra gifts and monies given which will be used to make up other shoeboxes and pay for transport.

It is lovely to be able to bless others and all your boxes will make such a difference to 70 children or adults this Christmas. We have so much and it is a joy to share what we have with others.

Thank you again.

Andrea Thomson and Kay Dalby



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Small groups @ Burnside Blairbeth Church

Format	Day and Time	Host	Frequency
Online, with plan for mixed at home & online	Monday 7.30 pm	John Hunter	fortnightly all year round
Online	Tuesday 7.30 pm	John Hunter	fortnightly all year round
In person – Maclean’s house	Monday 7.30 pm	John and Marjory Maclean	meets approximately fortnightly
Online	Alternate Mondays at 7.30	Ross and Leigh Galloway	
Church for young people	Sunday evening x1 per month	Andy McArthur and Andy Campbell	

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Announcements

Elizabeth Cherrie

Elizabeth Cherrie died on 5th November around one year after having suffered a severe stroke.

She was born to John and Bessy Cherrie and spent the first five years of her life in Tollcross. The family moved to Burnside and the home at 13 St Stephens Avenue was where Elizabeth spent a large portion of her life. She attended Burnside Primary and then Rutherglen Academy.



After school Elizabeth trained to be a nurse and met her great friend Dorothy who was to be a lifetime friend. Elizabeth became a godparent to Dorothy's children Roberta and Kenny, and they loved Aunt Elizabeth and cared for her in many practical ways later in life.

By all accounts Elizabeth was a great nurse. She worked in Canada for a time and had two spells working in the spinal unit at Stoke Mandeville hospital. She retained her interest in this field long after her retirement.

Elizabeth settled back in the family home upon the death of her father. She was a woman of great faith who was an integral part of our congregation. She participated in the Guild, the arts and crafts group and small groups. She was one of the most faithful pastoral care visitors you could hope to meet, and she was a fixture on reception duty not just for years, but for decades! Many of us have fond memories of her participation in church weekends away.

When we remember Elizabeth we remember her independence, her determination, her kindness, her smile, her cheery personality and much else besides. She lived out her faith to the benefit of our church family. Elizabeth was living proof that when we follow Jesus, we acquire brothers and sisters far beyond biological ties – a whole new family. It was a privilege to be part of Elizabeth’s family and we give thanks for our memories of her. Although we mourn, we rejoice that she is in the presence of her Saviour.

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The next Issue of Contact

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Articles can e-mailed to the editor - contact@burnsideblairbeth.church

Services are on YouTube – search for:

Burnside Blairbeth Church live stream

- CDs will be available as soon as possible after the Sunday morning services and will be delivered to homes. If you, or someone you know, would like to have a copy delivered, please contact:

Kate Airlie Mob: 07787 558 790 // kate.airlie@burnsideblairbeth.church

- **Contact** magazine is available to view on our website, www.burnsideblairbeth.church, under *What's On/News* tab.

If you would like to view Contact this way rather than have a paper copy delivered please send a message the office:

theoffice@burnsideblairbeth.church

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It is normal practice to include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of our office-bearers and other individuals in our church publications. If any person does not wish to have their personal details included they should inform the Communications Team Leader, Lesley Mackintosh.

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