



*Serving Christ,
each other and
the community*

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ♦ A time for some self-reflection
- ♦ Christmas events
- ♦ Kirk Session report
- ♦ Stamp appeal
- ♦ Youth Updates
- ♦ Re-belonging
- ♦ Kampi updates
- ♦ Café news



PRAYER FOCUS

*The light shines
in the darkness,
and the darkness
has not
overcome it.*

- John 1: 4-5

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

Harbour Lights

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CHRISTMAS 2024

Dear Friends,

It's that time of year again when our thoughts turn towards Christmas.

The temperature has finally dropped and it definitely feels more wintry. I quite like the cold, especially when there is no wind, snow or rain involved.

There's something lovely about crisp, cool days, and the sunsets can be magnificent.

For me, Christmas is a time to reflect. Reflect upon what, you might ask? To reflect mostly on the state of the world and what the fading year has brought with it.

It seems to me the world has taken a battering. Our news bulletins have been inundated with stories of war. There's also the constant talk about the state of the planet and people up in arms about a whole range of things, from politics, and what seems to me to be a dire lack of leadership across the board with regard to such things, to people retreating into their ideological laagers understanding everyone who doesn't agree with them as the enemy.

In a nutshell, I believe we are living in a world whose heart has grown cold and calloused.

Personally, I believe Christmas should also be a time for self-reflection, where we consider the quality of our own hearts and think about the condition of our souls...

Are we living selfish lives?

Are we loving people as we have been called to love?

Would Jesus approve of who we are or what we've become?



There's a passage in Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, in the gospel according to Matthew chapter 7, where he says to his followers:

"Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's eye, but do not notice the log in your own?"

Some have understood this to mean that we can never make judgments about anything, or even hold opinions, but this is not what Jesus was saying. He was calling his followers to change the only people they were actually capable of changing, if change is what was needed. In other words, he was calling them to self-reflect, to correct things in their own lives that needed correcting before they made any judgments about those around them, using the things of God's kingdom as their yardstick instead of the things of the world.

It's astonishing how many people want to shout the odds and change the world in our day and age, when they're not prepared to

continued over

change anything about themselves, and not necessarily change the world for the good of others, but mould it and shape it into what would suit them.

It seems to me that in this, there's a tremendous hunger in people to have power over the lives of others. Why else would one want to cancel someone, for example, other than to have control over them? A hunger for control born of fear. "Power tends to corrupt," Lord Acton said, "and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

In the birth of an infant, however, born in a stable two thousand years ago, we witness the very opposite of this. We witness, instead, the love and humility and compassion of God made flesh in the person of Jesus, one in whom there was no desire to control the lives of people, nor any fear of any sort. In him, humanity would experience the things of God's kingdom. In him, humanity would know hope. In him, humanity would witness the apogee of LOVE.

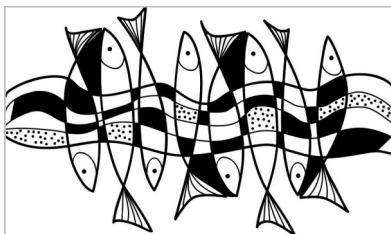
He would bring with him redemption for all of humankind and he would allow all of us, as God creations, to be grafted into him, so that our lives would no longer be self-seeking journeys, but ones of service to others, founded on love.

We might say, our world has always been a needy place, and we human beings never change, and I believe that this may well be true, that is until we truly encounter Jesus, the one whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, because when we do our lives are never the same again.

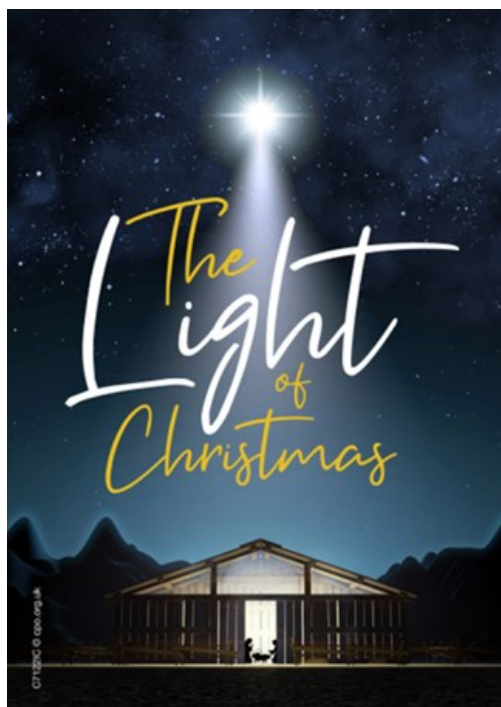
May God bless you and your loved ones this Christmas.

Much love,

Peter



Christmas events



Saturday 14th December

10.00 to 12.30 Christmas Extravaganza.

This is our usual Christmas event for primary aged children. Watch out for invitations and applications forms shortly.

Thursday 19th December

6.30pm Community Carol Singing in Fishmarket Square followed by refreshments in the church.

Volunteers are needed both to help lead the singing and also for those, who are challenged by singing in tune, to help with the catering.

Sunday 22nd December

10.30am Carol service with the Children's nativity.

Tuesday 24th December

4pm. All age service for Christmas Eve. Children can dress up to take part in an impromptu nativity.

11.30 Christmas Eve watchnight service preceded by mince pies from 11.15pm. Volunteers are also needed to help with the catering.

Christmas Day 10.30am Short All age Christmas service

Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session has continued to consider the vision for the future of the congregation. At the time of writing, we have not been informed where we will fit into the Presbytery Plan. In looking at vision we are not thinking so much about these structural issues but what God wants from us as a congregation of his people. Much of the October meeting was spent in silent prayer and then members shared what they felt God had been saying to them. We see this as an essential part of our seeking to discern the way ahead. We must find out what God wants because that is the only way to be fruitful as His church.

At the same time, we have taken some steps to move forward. The Re-Belonging Course is well underway and seems to be enjoyed by those attending. It is important for all of us to encourage each other to dig deeper into our faith and experience more of what God has on offer for us. We are very encouraged by the way in which members feel free to talk about their experience of God. There is a sense that the Holy Spirit is moving in our congregation. A new prayer group comprising those Elders who have retired from active service as elders has been established. We value the prayer support of those with much spiritual experience.

We are also reviewing the membership lists and hope to invite some of those who we have not seen for some time to another Back to Church service on 16th March 2025. Invitations will be printed nearer the time and please feel free to invite anyone you know who might be interested in attending. They do not need to have been a member of our congregation or of any church. It is an opportunity to invite others to experience church.

We are also considering employing an Administrator to help relieve the load of the Session Clerk and others so that more time can be spent on mission. An application has been lodged with Seeds for Growth Fund of the Church of Scotland for financial assistance.

We are also aware that the church website needs updating. Ewan Greig kindly spent some time over the summer looking at it but feels that it needs to be redesigned. The Session are looking at options for modernising it.

At the end of October we had a collection of foreign and old currency for Mary's Meals. 15 envelopes were donated and we still are awaiting finding out how much was raised. Thank you to all who supported it. Mary's Meals serves nutritious food to children in some of the world's poorest countries.

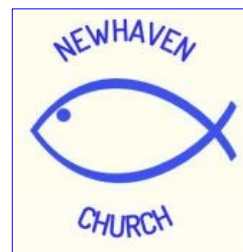
A new card reader has been obtained for the church, similar to the one in use in the café. We are very much aware that fewer people are carrying cash and we need to be able to collect donations electronically as that is how most people pay.

Christine Hodge and Liz Thomson attended a presentation by Stella Maris about the need for the crews of cruise ships to have an on shore place to connect with their families through the internet. The Session agreed that we should explore this further and see if we could assist in this ministry. We are hoping to have a discussion with a representative of Stella Maris early in the New Year.

A big 'thank you' to Bea Green for all she has brought to her role as café manager. We wish her every blessing.

We welcome our new café manager, Liesanne Craib-Baak, and look forward to getting to know her in the weeks ahead. Do drop in to the Café and say 'hello'!

John Hodge
Session Clerk



What to do with used stamps?

With Christmas cards about to pop through our letterboxes, please consider helping to establish tree nurseries in Malawi by collecting the used stamps.

Spearheaded by the Church of Scotland's partners in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, **Firmly Planted** is a community-based agroforestry initiative with the ambition of making a sustainable impact across central African countries, by resourcing and training individual groups, such as schools and churches, to respond to the various challenges of food insecurity, deforestation, climate change and youth unemployment, by growing tree seedlings in Tree Nursery Hubs.



The stamp appeal proceeds will go towards establishing the tree nurseries, specifically in Malawi, which has strong links to Scotland and the Church of Scotland.

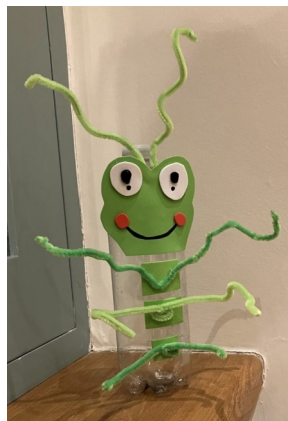
Please collect your used stamps (just cut/tear the envelope, leaving a border round the stamp(s)) and pop them in the envelope by the door.

Youth Updates

Messy Church Light Party

We had a very happy Messy Church Light party with 12 families with children of all ages, but especially delighted to have some older primaries too.

Our theme was "Jesus, Light of the world". We had fun playing games to do with light and making Glow pals ...



... and lighthouses.

We heard how God brought light into the world right at the beginning, when there was just darkness and, with the help of Ben the puppet, we explored how Jesus was the light of the world - a light that darkness cannot put out, and how He is with us now.

Thank you to all the families who came along and also to the team for their support and hard work. A special thank you to the kitchen team who produced a tasty meal of tomato pasta with grated cheese, cakes and fruit. Many parents said how much they appreciated an alternative to Halloween, and we felt the event was very worthwhile. We are also looking at a change of day, maybe a Sunday afternoon, to try and accommodate more families.

Christine Hodge

Christmas Extravaganza

On 14th December from 10:00am to 12:30pm we will be hosting our yearly extravaganza.

Children from P1-P7 are invited to join us for a morning of games, crafts, challenges, the Christmas story, fun and party food.

This is a free event but you will need to register your child. For bookings and further information please enquire to Sandy at newhavenchurchyw@gmail.com



Sandra Edwards
Youth worker



Church Bank Card Reader

As society increasingly appears to be moving more and more towards paying for things by bank or credit cards, rather than cash, the church has decided to purchase its own card reader.

We still welcome cash in the offering on a Sunday – or at other times – but if you would prefer to donate to the work of the church by card, please do see either Alister or any of the welcome team. We'll have it available for use most Sundays. It's easy to use, and someone will be on hand to guide you.



The card reader was made available at our Harvest service and several people took advantage of it to donate to Tearfund.

Another area of Newhaven's mission and outreach is the support of a young boy in Kenya. For many years now, we have been collecting pennies, first for Stanley and, more recently, for Timothy. However, pennies, and small change in general, are less used and, as a result, donations have been declining.

Please prayerfully consider supporting Timothy's education at Blessed Generation Children's Centre in Nyamira, Kenya.

Re-belonging

It was over a coffee at the tail end of last year that Peter, our minister, and I got to talking about the importance of nurturing faith through small group discussions. It was soon evident that we both shared a vision of a course for Newhaven Church that would serve as an introduction to the Bible and the Christian faith, and also an opportunity for us to share the faith journey we were on. And so it was that God planted the seed.

Over the next several months, God watered that seed and it grew into the course that we launched in August this year - [Re-belonging: the Story of the Christian Faith](#). The timing was providential and evidence of God's involvement. There had been a clear sense of God's presence at previous Sunday morning services and this prompted several folk in our congregation to respond to the invitation we put out - Do you want more of God in your life? Do you want to engage more with the Bible? Or are you perhaps just curious to explore the Christian faith?

[Re-belonging: the Story of the Christian Faith](#) is a series of 12 sessions that tell the story of the Christian faith as we discover it in the Bible. It covers the key points in that story, but also encourages exploration of the themes of the Christian faith. These themes will help to join the different dots of that story from thousands of years ago. And it is hoped that these themes will help reveal God in the present, and the connection between God and each of us, right now, wherever we are.

The course is called Re-belonging because we believe that each and every person, without any exceptions, belongs in

God's story. In fact, we believe that each and every person has always belonged in God's story, whether they know it or not, whether they have a faith or none.

We have two groups who meet fortnightly, with 11 people in total, in addition to Peter and me. Each group has met four times and although everyone knew each other beforehand, at least by sight from Sunday services, over the course of those four meetings we're getting to know each other more. It's wonderful to see relationships being built as we share stories, ask questions and explore the one relationship that transcends everything - the relationship God longs to have with each of us.

The 12 sessions are set out below and if this stirs the heart of anyone who isn't on the course then please let me know – I would hope we will be running the Re-belonging course again next year.

- Session 1 In the beginning: it was good
- Session 2 In the beginning: abundance prevailed
- Session 3 In the beginning: I AM
- Session 4 The human condition
- Session 5 Abraham: God's covenant
- Session 6 Israel's story: Exodus
- Session 7 Israel's story: King David
- Session 8 Jesus the Christ: the second incarnation
- Session 9 Jesus the Christ: announcing the Kingdom
- Session 10 Jesus the Christ: a love supreme
- Session 11 Jesus the Christ: the body of Christ
- Session 12 Where is God now?

Colin MacNeill

The Peace of Christ

Words by Lesley-Anne Weir

Melody: St Clement (Mission Praise 641, *The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended*)

The peace of Christ brings calm and comfort.
His love is constant in times of strife,
And when we turn to Him, in anguish,
He fills our souls with eternal life.

When stormy waves threaten to drown us in chaos,
And all our battles seem hard to win,
Our peace is restored if we take time to listen
To His quiet voice, through the raging din.

If all of our lives were infused by prayer,
And all our thoughts sprang from His love,
We'd conquer the madness of hatred and anger;
He'd live in our hearts like a gentle dove.

And so as we face all our trials and failures,
We're given strength and the means to cope;
So nothing can break us, nor take us, from Him.
We're led to His peace through faith and hope.

Kampi Child Care Centre update

The alert among you will have noticed that, this Autumn, for the first time in many years, there has been no Newhaven Church Ceilidh to raise funds for Kampi Child Care Centre! There are a couple of reasons for this. The first and less relevant reason is that for much of November into December, I have been in Australia on holiday.

The second, more relevant, reason for not holding the Ceilidh is that the Trustees of Kampi Disabled Children's Trust decided this year not to seek funds from its two principal donors, one of which is Newhaven Church. The funds currently held by the Trust are currently sufficient to cover several years' support to the Child Care Centre and the Trustees felt that it would not be wise to continue to seek the same level of support from the principal donors. By way of reminder, Kampi Disabled Children's Trust is a UK based trust which was established by our late friend and Newhaven member Georgie Orme, shortly after she retired from working in

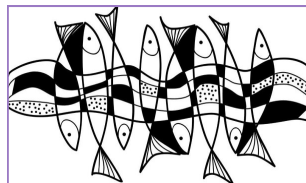
Kampi. The Trust provides financial support to the Child Care Centre, but has no involvement in the day to day operation of the Centre.

As for the Centre itself, it has a new manager, Stephen (known as Panga), who himself was a child cared for by the Centre. Rosemary Gilmore, one of the Trustees of the Trust and who herself worked with Georgie at the Centre remembers him well as 'one of her boys'. She visited Kampi last year, spending time with Panga, and was thrilled to see his strong faith and clear desire to help and to be an advocate for disabled young people.

Please keep the Child Care Centre in your prayers, as well as Panga and the local church committee who have oversight responsibility for running the Centre.

And, meanwhile, watch this space... There may be a social gathering in the first couple of months of 2025 to make up for a missing Ceilidh!

Colin MacNeill



What's next for The Heart?

In January 2023 we opened the buildings, now known as The Heart, for community uses in support of our vision - an Intergenerational Community Hub where everyone is better connected, less socially isolated and more actively engaged with their community.



In our first year of operation we focused on the buildings and their spaces and this year we undertook essential repairs to the fabric of the building.

We've also begun to develop community projects including the Dementia Meeting Centre on Wednesdays from 10.30-12.30; a free community lunch on Mondays from 12.30 until 2 pm with The Cyrenians; 'Open 4 Coffee' on Wednesday and Saturday morning with the opportunity to join our Knit and Natter group and/or IT support with ACE IT.

We would like to know your views: How we are doing? Are we meeting your needs? What are we missing? To respond, please take part in our survey:

Please click this on this link:

<https://heartofnewhaven.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fd16ea8a13e69c80d6ed68f43&id=b818c94313&e=bd8982f98>

Thank you!



The Tallest Christmas Tree

For the last 12 months, the focus for Norma's Knit and Natter group has been the knitting of the Tallest Christmas Tree, as a means of raising money to improve access to the Heart. The tree [will be unveiled at I am on 30 November](#), as part of a weekend of events - Saturday 30th from 10am to 4pm and Sunday 1st December from 2.30 to 5.30pm - with Christmas stalls, raffle, tombola, mulled wine and tasty treats!

Newhaven Heritage

Newhaveners feel that theirs is a history of being sidelined. In the past, the Free Fishermen's Society of Newhaven acted as a form of "town council", protecting and caring for the village and its residents. Following the "Clearances" of the 60s and early 70s., this responsibility was taken on by Edinburgh Council and the duty of care has been haphazard, to say the least. The last significant expenditure that was spent on Newhaven's environment was in 2015.

Since then, more and more people have begun to visit Newhaven from cruise ships and trams, yet they are met by moss, weeds, large sections of harling (roughcasting) that have fallen off the walls, overgrown trees and suchlike.

Frustrated by this neglect, and many fruitless representations to council officers and councillors to try to get some action, local resident Emma Kemp, who leads the volunteers of the Newhaven Heritage Gardens Group, organised a village meeting in Newhaven Church Hall. Councillors Stuart Dobbin and Sanne Dijkstra-Downie readily accepted the invitation to attend and were supportive of the meeting's purpose. Also in attendance were the Chairs of the Community Councils, as well as an officer from the council's Housing Department.

More than 80 residents were present to discuss their concerns, and a number of positive suggestions were made. Cllrs Dobbin and Dijkstra-Downie and the others listened attentively and sympathetically, promising to compare notes and find appropriate solutions where possible.

In February 2025, the community council boundaries will change in order to more closely align with those of the Council Wards. Newhaven will join with Trinity to create a refreshed community council.

This is an opportunity to reset the relationship between the residents of the village and the authorities.

Community Councils are non-party-political and independent of local authorities. Members are unpaid. A community council is empowered to speak on behalf of its community on a wide range of topics although it has no executive powers. Close cooperation with Ward Councillors is therefore especially important.

As at present, the Community Council (the new name will be decided by the members in February) will have 18 members of which 12 (who must be resident within the CC boundary) are elected and six are nominated by local organisations with an interest in the area. The CC also has scope to appoint non-voting associate members.

The village meeting was the first stepping-stone of the village's overdue rejuvenation. Democracy in action! Most importantly, the residents of Newhaven deserve nothing less.



Gordon Young
Clerk to Newhaven Heritage

Tears of Gold

'I am praying for the women while I paint'

Published in March 2024, *Tears of Gold: Portraits of Yazidi, Rohingya, and Nigerian Women* by British artist and human rights activist Hannah Rose Thomas, features stunning portrait paintings of women from three continents and three religions. It is a visual testimony not only of war and injustice but also of humanity and resilience in the face of sexual violence, persecution and forced displacement on account of faith or ethnicity.

Using techniques of traditional sacred art - early Renaissance tempera and oil painting and gold leaf - the artist conveys the humanity and dignity of Yazidi women who escaped ISIS captivity, Rohingya women who fled violence in Myanmar, and Nigerian women who survived Boko Haram violence, alongside their own words, stories, and self-portraits. A final chapter features portraits and stories of Afghan, Ukrainian, Uyghur, and Palestinian women.

All publisher profits from this book will be donated to charities working with women in these countries. The charities include Tearfund and Open Doors.



Samkina, aged 15, who fled her village when the Myanmar military set fire to it

Café News

Newhaven Connections Café... Connecting with the Community

Autumn is quickly heading into winter and it's made me ponder on those who with great courage and fortitude are living through the autumn or winter of their lives. At the café, we have many who are dealing with debilitating physical ailments and diagnosis, suffering bereavement and loss, learning by necessity to adapt to a narrower world than they lived in when younger. In these difficult situations, the importance of friendship and community takes on a new relevance, and makes Newhaven Connections café and the much-used church building an important place of reassurance and support.

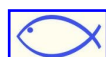


Only the other day I asked a customer how she was doing when she came in. She always has a huge smile on her face. Then she told me she has an agonising back condition that necessitates injections once a month for pain relief, as well as the constant taking of pain killers. To make matters worse, her husband was deteriorating in his battle with Alzheimer's and dementia. I normally don't tell people how I'm really doing, she told me, with typical Scottish stoicism, I usually just say I'm fine. While she was having her lunch, a couple of her friends came in and joined her table. It was good to see. It's so special the café can provide a place of solace for people with their differing needs.

Now that I am heading into my last month before stepping down, I'm happy that the new manager, Liesanne, is joining the café and is set to take it into the future. She's young and, by the sounds of it, more experienced in catering. I'm sure she'll have a clarity of vision to take the café forward and come up with some exciting new ideas, and I hope to make the transition as easy as possible for her.

Not being any kind of a cook or having any particular interest in food, let alone experience of hospitality, I have only tried to carry on Sandra's wonderful legacy as best I could. I was keen to take on a new challenge and jumped on board in my usual optimistic, impulsive manner. While I have enjoyed my time in the café, I've always felt my role to be that of a temporary caretaker. Once my daughter needed me to be more present, I knew it was time for me to step down. It's the right time for a new manager to shape the café and lead it forward.

I've been incredibly blessed by the customers, volunteers and assistants at the café during my time there. I've never met such a group of friendly, kind people in one place before. I wish to thank every one of you for warming my heart and restoring my faith in people. God bless you all.



Bea Green



**Committed to Serving Christ,
each other,
and the Community**

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Charity No. SC019117

Newhaven Church Roll

Baptism

Billie, daughter of
Patrick and Chloe Smith

Deaths

May Moncrieff

If you would like more
information on what
'membership' means and
involves, please speak to the
Minister or John Hodge.

Please notify the Roll-Keeper,
or your Elder,
of any changes/updates
relating to yourself
or other members.

Copy Deadline

Please send any items for
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