

The Informer

The Newsletter of Clincarthill Parish Church of Scotland



Issue 95: January 2024

Letter from the Manse

Church Website Address www.clincarthill.org.uk

¹⁶This is what the Lord says - he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, ¹⁷who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: ¹⁸Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. ¹⁹See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. ²⁰The wild animals honour me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, ²¹the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise. (Isaiah 43 NIVUK)

"New Year, new me". This is one of the stereotypical sayings associated with this time of year. I wonder if any of you have thought it about yourself?

The irony of statements like these (in the same category as "new year's resolutions") is they rarely last. We humans are, if nothing else, creatures of habit. That is not to say that someone cannot reinvent themselves; or overcome some pattern of behaviour that is unhelpful or unhealthy. It is simply to acknowledge that to do this requires an immense amount of commitment and will power; something the vast majority lack. Usually, within a relatively short period, old patterns of behaviour or habits reassert themselves; if for no other reason than they are familiar, simple, and well worn.

Thankfully, when God promises to do a new thing, He follows through. In this passage from the prophet Isaiah, God speaks, promising that His intention is to do something new.

The framing of this is interesting. Isaiah begins by referencing God rescuing His people from slavery in Egypt; hence the references to a path through the sea, and an army being extinguished there. This is clearly the Red Sea incident in the book of Exodus. This is important as it establishes God's character as the one who rescues His people.

This is immediately followed by God saying, "forget the former things". This seems odd: God's former actions reveal His character to us! Surely, if we forget them, then we lose something of who God is.

We are not to truly forget God's past actions. The clue is in the next phrase, "do not dwell on them". What God is essentially saying is, "freedom from slavery in Egypt; you're still thinking about that! No, look - I'm doing something new: you should focus on that instead!".

In the immediate future (and context of Isaiah 43) that new thing is unfortunately exile into Babylon - that hardly seems like an improvement of Israel's situation! However, as the whole chapter makes clear, this is for Israel's good - for they have forgotten the ways of God, and this experience will be a reminder to them. More than that, it is after the exile experience that the stage will be set for God's ultimate new thing; Jesus.

In the short excerpt above, there is a hint to how God is putting the world right: water in the wasteland, and so on. We know that God achieves this completely in Jesus: in taking upon Himself the sin of the world, and paying that debt, He opens the way for the wrongs of the world to be forgiven and put right. Furthermore, in His resurrection, Jesus declares that not only will creation be made new, we will be made new: granted new and eternal bodies, as we live with God for eternity in the New Creation.

As we enter 2024 together, knowing little of what is in store; let us take comfort in the God of new things, who brought us salvation in Christ, and assures us that even we are being made new through Him.

Stuart

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Next Issue deadline Sunday 28 January

Email any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter to sessionclerk@clincarthill.org.uk



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MISSION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM UPDATE

Firstly, I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped unload and carry the trees to people's cars at the Bethany Caring Christmas Tree event in early December. By hosting this event the charity will have raised substantial funds. It was good to welcome so many visitors and families who popped in for tea/coffee and Christmas treats. This was greatly appreciated by those who came along to collect their trees, especially as it was a miserable morning weather-wise!

The Mission team have continued to be very active over the winter months, providing the warm space during December and January. We have been delighted to meet a number of new people over the last few weeks. Providing a warm space for 3 hours each Thursday is an important community outreach and has been greatly appreciated by those who have attended, especially between Christmas and New Year. We provide soup, rolls and hot drinks as well as treats. We currently have between 15-17 people attending each week. We had a Christmas event with music from Alastair McDonald, a Christmas quiz and a visit from the 'Christmas Elf', who gave our visitors a small gift of a selection box which were donated from the Florida Park pub.

We were also able to support Queen's Park Community Foundation with the delivery of Christmas food parcels. These went to local people in the area, most of whom live on their own. The Florida Park pub also gave us selection boxes which were distributed to the concierge in the high flats to identify people living on their own. The mission team led the community carol singing before the family service on Christmas Eve. Around 60 people attended this and enjoyed hot chocolate too. Thanks to those in the team who have helped with all these events and a big thank you to some new volunteers as well.

Looking ahead to later this month, we were approached by the local college who have a supported learning department. Some of the students, who will be supported by their lecturer, will help at the last few weeks of the warm space. We look forward to welcoming them.

Our mission is to serve God by serving our neighbour and we continue to look at new ways to serve. Please continue to pray for the outreach and mission of our church, and for those in the local area who use our building.

Wishing you all a peaceful and happy new year!

Stephen Kennedy
Mission and Community Outreach Team

The Guild

Welcome back to a new session

January Programme

Monday 8 January—Armchair Exercises - Irene Hay

Monday 15 January—"Raincoats & Sunglasses" - Caroline Johnston

Monday 22 January—Visit to the Arctic - Vivienne Macdonald

Monday 29 January—Beetle Drive - On our own



Sheila Morrow

Finance News

The congregation and wider community have been very generous and the following donations have been received and where necessary passed on to other charities.

Baird Penny Collection

With thanks to Doris Stott who continues to gather the pennies collected, donations have been sent to the following charities:

- Poppy Scotland £25
- Lodging House Mission £25
- Glasgow City Mission £25
- The Leprosy Mission £25
- Parkinsons UK £25
- Macmillan Cancer Support £25

In our December edition of the Informer we highlighted a number of special milestone birthdays amongst our congregation.

We understand that Netta Sharp also recently celebrated her 90th birthday. Netta was in hospital at the time of her birthday but friends were able to join her for a small celebration

Congratulations Netta! The congregation would like to wish you many happy returns, with health and happiness throughout the coming year.

Registered Scottish Charity SC010138