

Diary: November

December

1		
2		10.30 Makerstoun
3		
4	10.30 Makerstoun	
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		10.30 Stichill Holy Communion
10		
11	Remembrance Day, see pg.3	Bridge 7pm
12		Guild Christmas Social 2.30
13	Bridge 7pm	
14		
15		
16		10.30 Smail., 6.30 Roxburgh
17		
18	10.30 Roxburgh	
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		6.30pm Stichill Carol Service
24		6.30pm Mak.C. Eve Service
25	10.30 Stichill	
26		
27	Bridge 7pm	
28		
29		
30		10.30 Smailholm
31		

Kelso Country Churches



The Country Link

~~~~~ November/December, 2018



This issue of the newsletter covers November and December. The dates of 11<sup>th</sup> November and 25<sup>th</sup> December can be linked by the word “sacrifice”.

To commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the “war to end all wars” there will be services and wreath-laying ceremonies all round the country. We will think of those men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope that we might live in peace. We will think especially of those who came from our lovely Borderlands and went to endure the horrors of the Somme and Flanders fields and never returned. The question for us today is – are we living the kind of lives that justify that sacrifice?

I love the whole Christmas season but specifically I love Advent, the anticipation of the birth of Jesus. I love to hear the stories of angels, shepherds, wise men and a young man and woman wrestling with the mystery of immaculate conception. This all comes to a crescendo about 4.30pm in Denholm Church when the children of the Brownies and Boys Brigade and their friends and families gather to see and take part in the nativity story. The excitement is so intense that you know there will be tears before bed-time. After they leave, the Church is quiet and empty but still warm as if it too is waiting for something else. Our Watchnight Service starts at 11.30pm. This service has a different more contemplative feel. It’s adults only for a start although sometimes we have teenagers who are too old to be told to go to bed or Santa won’t come. There is a quiet buzz of anticipation at the beginning of the service and great joy when after midnight we can embrace our neighbours and wish them all a “Happy Christmas.” The story of Jesus is also one of sacrifice. Our triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit gave us his Son who died on the cross so that we might have our sins forgiven and know that there is a life after this one. For us today the question is – are we living lives that show to the world at large that we are disciples of Jesus Christ our lord and Saviour and that we deserve that sacrifice?

I wish you every blessing both during Remembrance and the Christmas season.

Helen Howden, Interim Moderator.

## *Parish News and Updates*

**Harvest Thanksgiving** was celebrated in Stichill Church on 14<sup>th</sup> October. Generous donations of food items were given to Kelso Food Bank and a Retiring Offering of £94 was raised for 'Self Help Africa.' The flowers and fruits decorating the church were given to people in the community who are housebound or in need of cheering up. The service reflected God's unfailing abundance and generosity in all seasons.

**The afternoon concert** held in Stichill Church on 16<sup>th</sup> September was much appreciated by a wide audience, mainly from outwith our parishes. The sum of £230 was raised for church funds.

**Blythwood Care Shoe Box Appeal:** I can now report that 71 festive-wrapped boxes have been generously filled with useful and cosy gifts for people of all ages by members of our congregations and communities. When you read this, they will be on their way to destinations in countries in Eastern Europe and Pakistan and will give comfort and pleasure to people who do not receive gifts and have few comforts in their lives.

The Blythwood Care motto is: Transforming lives through Christian care for body and soul.

Isabel Amos is unwell and is unable to play the organ for the time being. Recent reports are that she is improving and hopes to be playing the organ for our services fairly soon. We send good wishes to her for restored health. In the meantime, the new digital hymnal system which was described in the last magazine, has been used and is proving very successful in leading our singing in church. Jim Smith has put much time and effort into operating the machine and is more competent with every use. Comments have been favourable and the sound and quality of the music is much superior to CDs' of hymn music played in the past when no organist was available.

**The Guild:** The next meeting is on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November when David Harvey and members of local charity, Cheviot Youth, will give a talk and presentation on the work the charity is involved in. If you would like to know more about this charity, please come and join us. You will be assured of a warm welcome – and a cup of tea!

### **Our Church Family**

20<sup>th</sup> September: The funeral took place in Borders Crematorium of Derrick Jowett, Smailholm: dear husband of Marjorie. The funeral was conducted by Rev Anna Rodwell.

Website: [kelsolinkedchurchescofs.org](http://kelsolinkedchurchescofs.org)

Scottish charity no. SC000958

## *Handel's Messiah*

*The Roxburgh Singers are performing  
The Messiah on 1<sup>st</sup> December in Melrose  
Parish Church at 7pm.*

### *Soloists*

*Fiona Wilkie (Soprano)*

*Beth Taylor (Alto)*

*Mike Towers (Tenor)*

*Jerome Knox (Baritone)*



*Small orchestra directed by Marion Dodd*

*Tickets: £10 accompanied children free,  
available from Choir members or at door.*

*The concert is supporting "My Name's Daddie  
Foundation" and profits go to finding a cure  
For Motor Neurone Disease*

*A great start to the festive season!*

# Kid's Page

## Christmas Word Search

Level 3



R N A M W O N S Y Q I D  
 E C Y J N E F L U N E S  
 E H B E T H L E H E M T  
 D R A S Z O K V O M G O  
 N I L U H R C G E E I C  
 I S Y S E V A T Y S F K  
 E T E G H A N B R I T I  
 R M N B T T D A K W S N  
 M A H O M N Y S C L T G  
 M S Y W C A R O L S A O  
 A S O S U S X E E E R T  
 H G I E L S B I J W P O



- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Bells     | 11. Manger   |
| 2. Bethlehem | 12. Reindeer |
| 3. Bows      | 13. Santa    |
| 4. Candy     | 14. Sleigh   |
| 5. Carols    | 15. Snowman  |
| 6. Christmas | 16. Star     |
| 7. Elves     | 17. Stocking |
| 8. Gifts     | 18. Toys     |
| 9. Holly     | 19. Tree     |
| 10. Jesus    | 20. Wisemen  |

# Preaching Plan for November/December, 2018

## November

4<sup>th</sup> Makerstoun

David Harvey

Remembrance Sunday

11<sup>th</sup> Makerstoun War Memorial at 9.45am  
 followed by service in church.

Jim Smith



Smailholm War Memorial at 11am

Jim Smith

Roxburgh War Memorial at 12noon

Jim Smith

Nenthorn War Memorial at 10am

Charlie Orr

Stichill War Memorial at 10.45 am

Rev. McHaffie

followed by service in church

Hume War Memorial at 12noon

Rev. McHaffie

18<sup>th</sup> Roxburgh

Communion

Rev. McHaffie

25<sup>th</sup> Stichill

Guild Service

## December

2<sup>nd</sup> Makerstoun

Rev. Robert Breustedt

9<sup>th</sup> Stichill

Communion

Rev. Robin McHaffie

16<sup>th</sup> Smailholm

Rev. Bob Higham

“ Roxburgh Songs of Christmas Praise at 6.30pm

23<sup>rd</sup> Stichill at 6.30pm Service of Lessons and Carols

24<sup>th</sup> Makerstoun Christmas Eve Service at 6.30pm

30<sup>th</sup> Smailholm

Charlie Orr

## January, 2019

6<sup>th</sup> Makerstoun

Rev. Robin McHaffie

All services start at 10.30am unless stated otherwise.

## A Reminder of Peace

This month of Remembrance is particularly significant as it marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the First World War. There are no longer any surviving veterans of this war but the lives of every family in the land were touched in some way by the four-year conflict that ended millions of lives.



In this month's 'Life and Work', The Moderator of the General Assembly, Rt Rev Susan Brown reflects on when she was about to start her ministry in her first charge, a retired minister gave her a present. It was an army-issue case containing a small plate and cup and he told her it was the communion set that chaplains to the armed forces carried and that this case and its contents had been in use during the Battle of the

Somme.

He asked only that it be used. And it has been.

Susan has used this communion set on many occasions; for home communions and small gatherings and because of its history, it is even more able to connect people with those for whom a world at war was very real.

The Moderator reflects, *"Holding the cup in your hands, the stories of life in the trenches hit home. It brings close the sheer volume of men who were taken from their everyday lives and placed in uniform to face the terrible reality of war with all its horrendous sights and sounds and smells.*

*Raising the cup to your lips, you can't help but think of the names of those on our country's war memorials who did not come home. I cannot think of those whose lips have sipped from the cup, without thinking of the price they were asked to pay to enable us to live in freedom.*

*As we mark 100 years since the ending of the First World War, the greatest 'thank you' we can offer those who gave so much, is our commitment to living in and at peace."*

We are the dead. Short days ago  
we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
loved and were loved, and now we lie  
in Flanders field.

John McCrae

## A Prayer for Advent

O come, O come Immanuel!

Ransom those in exile.



Care for those who have fled their homeland in fear.

Nurture those who live under oppressive regimes.

Give the marginalised the strength and assurance of your presence.

May people find their true home in you.

O come, O come Wisdom from above!

Guide all who govern nations.

Be a sign of integrity for government ministers and civic leaders.

Deliver those in public service from corruption and time-serving.

Lead our politicians to honest goals without distorting truth.

May all people keep conscience pure and intention honourable.

O come, O come Rod of Jesse!

Give rulers a sovereignty born of true humility.

Grant stability and continuity to faithful servants of the nations.

Number the citizens of our nation among the people of faith.

May all Christian people be a signpost to your royal throne.

O come, O come Key of David!

Open the hearts of the hard-hearted and callous.

Unlock the unforgiving spirit and those bound by prejudice.

Proclaim again that the gates of heaven are wide open.

May the day come when all people find the hope of life beyond death.

O come, O come Dayspring!

Let your light shine on those in dark depression.

Dawn with growing light on those full of doubt.

May all people walk out of the night-time of their fear into the light of  
your new day.

O come, O come Immanuel!

Be born again in the Bethlehem of our time.

Live again in the Galilee of our generation.

And be raised high amongst us, by the power of God.

Jesus! Immanuel! Sign of the Kingdom! Come!

# Light Relief

A stingy man went Christmas shopping, but everything he saw was too expensive except for a £50 vase that was on sale for £2 because the handle had been broken off. He bought it and asked the sales assistant to post it so that his friend would think that he had paid £50 and it had been broken in transit.

A week after Christmas he received a thank you note from his friend. "Thank you so much for the lovely vase," his letter read, "It was nice of you to wrap each piece separately!"

A four year old boy was asked to give thanks before Christmas dinner. The family bowed their heads in expectation. He began his prayer, thanking God for all his friends, naming them one by one. Then he thanked mummy and daddy, brother and sister, grandma and grandpa then he began to thank God for the food. He gave thanks for the turkey, the stuffing, the gravy, mince pies, Christmas pudding and even the brandy butter.

Then he paused, and everyone waited – and waited. After a long silence, the boy looked at his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the sprouts, won't he know that I am lying?"

An old man was relaxing at his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party when a reporter went up to him. "Sir, what is the secret of your long life?"

The man considered this for a moment, then replied, "Every day at 9pm I have a glass of port. Good for the heart." The reporter asked, "That's all?" The man smiled, "That, and cancelling my voyage on the Titanic."

When the orchestra started playing Tchaikovsky's "Romeo and Juliet" overture, a woman noticed tears beginning to run down the cheeks of the elderly man she was sitting next to. Before long, he was sobbing outright, so she turned and said gently, "You must be an incurable romantic." "Not at all," he gulped, "I'm a musician."

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

*Quote by Thomas Edison*

12.

## *The Kirkin' O the Plough*

Sophia Duncan

On the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> October, Smailholm Kirk had the privilege of hosting the Blessing of the Plough service prior to the Scottish Ploughing Championships which were held over the weekend at Bettyfield, Smailholm. This is an important event in the calander of ploughing enthusiasts and this was evident when a vintage plough from the 1800's was brought into the church and placed in front of the communion table.

A good number of participants in the competitions came, some with their families to the service which was led by Rev. Robin McHaffie. Favourite hymns were sung lustily, God's word was heard and Robin blessed the plough before everyone left the church, perhaps to bless the forthcoming ploughing matches with a wee dram!



### **John Logan now continues the story:**

It was good to see the event taking place in our parish. Driving past in your car was quite a sight, and I wasn't going to miss a walk round. There were 180 competitors in the field. They came from Thurso to Devon and competition was fierce. We had our own representative in Stewart Shaw (grandson of retired elder Stewart Sen.) He ploughed a grand furrow, winning first prize in his under twenty-six class. It was a novelty seeing all the effort that goes into the show, like little horticultural tractors manfully toiling with their furrows.



Next came the Horse class with six pairs of Clydesdales doing their work, and in addition, the biggest pair of grey Percheron...magnificent beasts lazily carrying out their task.

All of a sudden there was an entanglement of chains, a detachment of plough, some nasty kicks and two Clydesdales galloped into the distance. Fortunately there were no bones broken!

The next field had local merchants demonstrating huge tractors and monster ploughs, but I decided this was not for me. I moved on to vintage tractors and ploughs. The competition here was fierce, so concentration was intense all the way along the field. 5.

What caught my eye was one tractor had a nice wooden box bolted to the mudguard and as the tractor was driving along, the owner's wee terrier was sitting bolt upright, and when his tractor turned out at the end, he lay down.

After seeing the modern reversible ploughs – the kind that I have, it was time to return. A lift was at hand by none other than our own tractor man in his buggy who was himself a chief inspector.

We passed the tractor and trailer bus and who was hitching a lift but fellow elder, Jim Fleming! Back at the farm we had bacon rolls and a chat about old times with some friends, then home.

It was a thoroughly satisfying day and I hadn't seen it all!

Afterwards, Bettyfield was declared an outstanding venue.

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From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

Another year is almost over, and we can reflect on a busy and in many ways, fruitful year in Kelso Country Churches. There have been memorable events and services and social occasions reported on in each magazine which have helped to keep our commitment and enthusiasm for God's work in our parishes fresh. There have also been a few disappointments and complacency in the quest to breathe new life into these rural communities. But with our Worship Team and the valuable help of retired ministers, we are ensuring continuity of our services and visiting members in the community who are ill, lonely or need a lift to church or need a helping hand.

Thank you to everyone who has helped me with compiling the Country Link by submitting stories, book reviews and reports, proof reading, stapling, and delivering round the districts.

Things would not go as smoothly as they do without the constant work and commitment of our Session Clerk, Jim Smith, Property Convener, Bert Duncan and Treasurer, Liz Orr. THANK YOU.

This bumper edition includes details of all our services and activities during November and Advent, and I hope it can be distributed to more homes along with a personal invitation to join in the services.

To all our readers and their loved ones, have a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Sophia

God is Dog spelt backwards

We were so glad to welcome him on Christmas Day.

It was like having a new member of the family.

He looked so tiny and helpless;

It made you want to pick him up and cuddle him.

We made promises, of course;

said we would make room for him in our home,

said we would alter our routines to fit him in,

said we would take a walk with him each day.

But the novelty soon began to wear off.

By the New Year, we were mentioning him less often,
daily chores were less of a thrill, more of a reluctant duty.

By February he was unwanted.

By March we had abandoned him completely.

We should have read the warnings,

We should have counted the cost.

A God is for life – not just for Christmas.

Bright Star!

Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art –

Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night

and watching, with eternal lids apart,

like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,

The moving waters at their priestlike task

of pure ablution round earth's human shores,

or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask

of snow upon the mountains and the moors –

No – yet steadfast, still unchangeable,

pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,

to feel for ever it's soft fall and swell,

awake for ever in sweet unrest.

Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,

and so live ever – or else swoon to death.

John Keats (1795-1821)



Book Review

The Winter of the World: Poems of the Great War:

Edited by Dominic Hubbard and John Onions



This illuminating selection of First World War poetry includes poems by Vera Britain, Rupert Brooke, Robert Graves, Rudyard Kipling, Edith Nesbit, Wilfred Owen and many others. Some poems are well known, e.g., John McCrae's

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row....*

But many poets have been all but forgotten and this book is an important, and timely, revival of their work.

The poems are presented in chronological order of the date they were written and the editor adds helpful notes, setting them in context, usually with information on the life (and sometimes death) of the authors.

I shall leave the last word to Wilfred Owen (1914):

*War broke and now the Winter of the world
With perishing great darkness closes in.*

Andrew Nicholson

DATA PROTECTION

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR 2018) gives individuals more rights and protection with regard to how their personal data is used by organisations. Kelso Country Churches must comply with these regulations and the Session has therefore reviewed the personal information kept relating to members of the congregation and that it is held securely.

A notice will be displayed in each of the churches outlining how the information is used and your rights as an individual to review data relating to you, should you wish.

It is hoped that you will take time to read this notice and any comments would be welcomed by the Session.

Robert Monie, KCC Data Protection Co-ordinator

Christmas in Kelso Country Churches



'**Guild's Together**' are holding a service of Lessons and Carols in Hawick Teviot Church on Sunday, 2nd December at 2.30pm. All Guild groups in our Presbytery will be represented and will take part in the service. Guild ladies, please note this date in your diaries. Transport will be arranged nearer the time.

KCC Guild Christmas Social afternoon is on Wednesday, 12th December at 2.30pm in Stichill Church. We will welcome Ian Landles, well known expert on all things pertaining to Hawick and a great storyteller and singer. Everyone in our church family are invited, as well as visitors from other Guilds in our area, and invitations will also go out to those in our own church family who find it difficult to attend church or social outings. Transport can be arranged.

A festive afternoon tea will be served in the hall to round off what promises to be an entertaining afternoon. Remember that men are also welcome to the Guild so don't be shy Boys!

There will be two Advent services on Sunday, 16th December; the first in Smaiholm at 10.30am led by Rev. Bob Higham and an evening Songs of Christmas Praise in Roxburgh Church at 6.30pm led by the Worship Team. Gifts may be brought to either of these services for Border Women's Aid; wrapped and labelled for either a boy, girl or mum.

KCC Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols is on Sunday, 23rd December in Stichill Church at 6.30pm. Members of all four churches and hopefully the children will take part, and it all adds up to one of the highlights of our church year.

Mulled wine, mince pies and shortbread will be served in the hall so please put the date in your diary, come along and bring family and friends to this fitting way of heralding the start of Christmas week.

Makerstoun Family Service is on Christmas Eve at 6.30pm. The service will be planned by members of the congregation and people of all ages are warmly welcomed.

Roxburgh Village: on Christmas Eve, residents of the village will gather round the Christmas Tree at 6.30pm to sing carols.

Look beyond the gift wrapping

A young man was getting ready to graduate from college. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer's showroom, and knowing that his father could afford it, he told him that he really wanted it.

As graduation day approached, the young man looked for signs that his father had bought the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study. His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son, and told him how much he loved him.

He handed his son a beautifully wrapped gift box. Curious, but somewhat disappointed, the young man opened the box and found a lovely leather-bound Bible, with his name embossed in gold.



Angrily, he raised his voice to his father and said, "With all your money you give me a Bible?" and stormed out of the house, leaving the Bible behind.

Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but he had not seen his father since graduation day. His father was now very old, and the son thought that perhaps it was time he went to visit him. Before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and had willed all his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things.

When he arrived at his father's house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search through his father's important papers and saw the still-new Bible, just as he had left it years ago.

In tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages. His father had carefully underlined a verse, Matthew 7:11 "If you, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven give to those who ask Him?"

As he read those words, a car key dropped from the back of the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer's name; the same dealer who had the sports car he desired. On the tag was the date of the graduation, and the words.....PAID IN FULL.

1 Corinthians 13 Christmas Version

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny baubles but do not show love to my family, I am just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas pies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautiful adorned table at mealtimes, but do not show love to my family, I am just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol sing in the nursing home and give all I have to charity but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend myriads of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has co-ordinated Christmas china and table linen.

Love doesn't yell at the children to get out of the way but is thankful that they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Computer games will break, cashmere sweaters will wear out and golf clubs get lost.

But giving the gift of love will endure.

Happy Christmas.

Taken from Cargill-Burrelton & Collace Church Newsletter.

