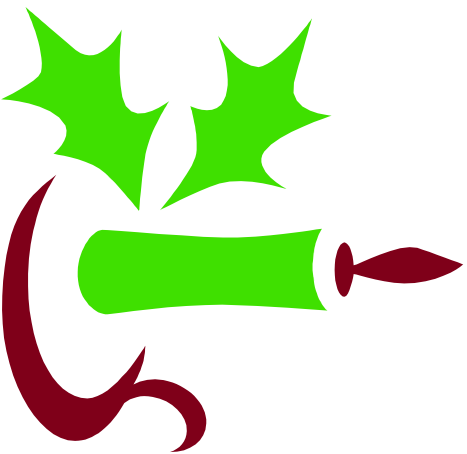
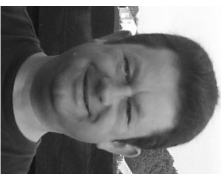


OUTLOOK



Christmas 2007



Hello, and welcome to the Christmas edition of OUTLOOK magazine. Why don't you go and make yourselves a cuppa, grab a mince pie and sit down for a few moments in between all the jobs that you have to do before Christmas and have a read at the rest of OUTLOOK while you have the chance.

As usual, there is a lot going on at the church over the Advent and Christmas season and we hope that you will be able to join with us in the parties, special carol services at St. Leonard's and at Diccombe and, of course, our Sunday services in the run up to Christmas.

I know that it is a busy time, but this year I wonder if we could all just take a few moments to put aside the wrapping paper and the turkey cooking calculator to remember those around us for whom Christmas is not such a happy time. Let's share a prayer for those who won't be sitting round the table with family; let's share a prayer for those who have lost someone this year; let's share a prayer for those who simply can't afford all the trimmings.

In my sermon at St. Leonard's on the first Sunday in Advent, I remembered a song by Larry Norman called *I wish we'd all been ready*. As we draw closer to the day when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also need to be preparing ourselves for the day when Jesus will come again—just like he promised.

So, as we all rush around getting ready for Christmas, remember that we also have to be ready to greet *The Heaven Born Prince Of Peace* when He returns in all his glory—whenever that will be.

I pray that you experience God's blessing this Christmas.

Barry





Our Advent Calendar



2nd December (1st Sunday in Advent)

9:30 & 11:00 am : Worship at St. Leonard's
11:00 am : Communion at Pitcorthie

9th December (2nd Sunday in Advent)

9:30 & 11:00 am : Worship at St. Leonard's
11:00 am : Worship at Pitcorthie

16th December (3rd Sunday in Advent)

9:30 & 11:00 am : Worship at St. Leonard's
11:00 am : Worship at Pitcorthie
6:30 pm : *Carols by Candlelight* at St. Leonard's
followed by the re-dedication of the halls.

23rd December (4th Sunday in Advent)

11:00 am : Children's Nativity at St. Leonard's
(with Blessing & short communion)

Christmas Eve

6:30 pm : Family carol service at Pitcorthie
11:30 pm : Watchnight Service at St. Leonard's

Christmas Day

10:00 am : Christmas for everyone at St. Leonard's

30th December

11:00 am : Family worship at St. Leonard's

6th January 2008

11:00 am : Communion at St. Leonard's



Och Aye! What's going on in China?
Graham & Mary Robertson

Forward two, three, four - back two, three, four. James & Kirsty have been teaching 70 chinese students celtich dancing in Yangling, about an hour west of Xian! Sometimes we wonder whether they are learning Mandarin or teaching the Scottish language & culture to the Chinese. Perhaps, it is a bit of both.



Anyway they were in Yangling because they are planning to take a team of 10 to 12 people there, next summer, for 4 weeks from 8th July to 8th August 2008. This will involve teaching English to Chinese students in the morning and doing Olympic themed activities with them in the afternoon. There will also be the chance to see the sights and relax towards the end of the trip. This will appeal to students in their summer holidays, although anyone over 18 is welcome, but the more Scots the merrier. Any hammer throwers out there? The trip finishes before the Olympics start. There will be a cost associated with the trip but if you are interested or know of someone who is please contact us on (01383) 736814 for more information. The deadline for signing up is February 2008.

James & Kirsty appreciated a 'flying visit' from Catherine Stihler and her husband at the end of October.

James informs us that Xian is now really cold. Chinese heating systems are run by calendar dates and will not be turned on until Nov. 15th, no matter how cold it is. They are both looking for stamina, motivation and continued progress in their language study. The more their Chinese progresses, the tougher

it gets, resulting in more time and effort. At the time of writing their first language assessments are due. This will let them know what progress they have made to date and what they have to work on. Although it is not an exam as such it is equally nerve wracking.

We have just posted their Christmas parcels - some by airmail, others by surface mail so at least something should arrive by the 25th December. James & Kirsty ask us to extend Christmas greetings to you all in Scotland.

Please keep them in your thoughts as this will be the first time either has been unable to visit their parents over the Christmas period.



Stop Press! Heating has just come on but James informs us that this means more pollution from the coal fired power stations.

What? No Rehearsals?

DJ Bez

In the past, I have stuck to reviewing Christian music CDs mainly because it has been ages since I last went to a decent Christian music gig. That thankfully changed recently when *No Rehearsal Required* played at St. Leonard's. *No Rehearsal Required* is a 4 piece outfit, augmented by the young and very talented Sarah Moore, who led us in a worship and praise session that included new and traditional worship songs presented in an altogether refreshing and engaging way. Those who were there thoroughly enjoyed the experience and have already asked if we can do it again. Why not, I say.



STOP PRESS: IMPORTANT NEWS

Over the next few months, we are changing the way that we do some things—we hope for the better. We hope that you like these changes. Either way—please let us know.

COMMUNION

We will celebrate the sacrament at St. Leonard's on the first Sunday in January, April, July and October and at Pitcorthie on the first Sunday in February, May, August and November. Communion will also be celebrated on Moundry Thursday and offer the service on the fourth Sunday of Advent.

PRAYER & PRAISE

Prayer, it has been said, is the power house of the church. Earlier this year, we started a new prayer and praise time where we meet every second Tuesday at 7.30 pm in the Morris Hall. Everyone is welcome to join with us to praise our God and to put prayers for our congregation and parish at the very heart of our life together. The Wednesday morning prayer group continues to meet in the committee room, every Wednesday at 10.15.

LARGE PRINT ORDER OF SERVICE

Each week, our Order of Service is distributed to those in church for use during the service—and to take home so that you have all the notices at hand. If you would like a large print version, we will have a few copies available every Sunday. Just ask and you will receive!

SERMON RECORDINGS

On most Sundays, the sermon is recorded and made available on the church website or you can subscribe to our iTunes podcast and receive the recording in MP3 format each week.

For those of you who do not have access to a computer or the internet, you can get a CD with a couple of sermons on it. Please contact the church office, your elder or the minister. If you don't have a CD player, then we will try and get one for you to borrow.



Congratulations!

...to all those who will have completed the 'Bible in a year' programme. For 2008, there will be a monthly set of readings which can be used to read through the bible in Chronological Order—so if you didn't try this year or were unable to complete the bible in a year there will be a different (perhaps easier) way to do so this coming year. These readings will be available in church month by month. They will also be available to print off at home from our church website. You will also be able to listen to these portions of God's word on our website—a new section day by day.

...to everyone who has worked so hard over the past year rebuilding and redecorating our two halls, installing new lighting, heating, disabled ramps and alarms as well as the ongoing cleaning and maintenance work in the church and grounds. We will be rededicating the halls after the Carols by Candlelight service on December 1st.

*The next OUTLOOK
will be the Easter edition*

*Easter Sunday 2008 is March 23rd
OUTLOOK articles need to be handed into the Church
Office by Sunday 10th February 2008*

A Letter from God

As you got up this morning I watched you and hoped you would talk to me, even if it was just a few words, asking my opinion or thanking me for something good that happened in your life yesterday but I noticed you were too busy trying to find the right outfit to put on and wear to work.

I watched again. When you ran around the house getting ready, I knew there would be a few minutes for you to stop and say hello, but you were too busy. At one point, you had to wait fifteen minutes with nothing to do except sit on a chair. Then I saw you spring to your feet. I thought you wanted to talk to me, but you ran to the phone and called your friend to get latest gossip. I watched you as you went to work and watched patiently all day long. With all your activities, I guess you were too busy to say anything to me. I noticed that before lunch you looked around, maybe you felt too embarrassed to talk to me, that is why you didn't bow your head. You glanced three of four tables over and you noticed some of your friends talking briefly to me before they ate, but you didn't. That's OK. There is still some more time left and I hope that you will talk to me yet.

You went home and it seems as if you had a lot of things to do. After a few of them were done you turned on the TV. I don't know if you like TV or not, just about anything goes there, but you spend a lot of time each day in front of it not thinking about anything – just enjoying the show. I watched patiently again as you watched TV and ate your meal, but again you didn't talk to me.

Ey! Waittime I guess you felt too tired. After you said goodnight to your family you plopped into bed and fell asleep in no time. That's OK because you may not realise that I am always there for you. I have more patience than you will ever know. I even want to talk you to be patient with others as well. I love you so much that I wait every day for a word, a prayer or thought or a thankful part of your heart. It's hard to have a one-sided conversation.

Well, you are getting up again, and once again, I will wait with nothing but love for you, hoping that today you will give me some time.

Have a wonderful day!
Your best friend,
GOD.



The Marise,
Nov. 07

Dear friends,

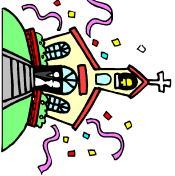
Of course, the 'letter from God' isn't always the way with everyone. But in general, how sadly true of humankind's relationship with God it is. And how wonderfully true also of God's relationship with us. As I write, we are fast approaching the season of Advent, which begins this year on the first Sunday of December. Advent is a time of, and for, preparation. You can't begin to prepare too early to prepare the way for the coming of God into our world and lives. So with the 'Letter fro God' in mind, should we perhaps start our preparations now, this very day, and be sure to make some time and space to deepen our relationship with him? After all, as he says in that other letter he gave to us, the love letter we call the Bible, "I am with **you** always."

With prayers for God's richest blessings for you and yours this Advent and Christmas,

Your friend and minister,

GOING TO CHURCH EXTENDS YOUR LIFE

According to new medical research from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre, weekly attendance at a religious service adds two to three years to your life. Unfortunately, according to the researcher it is also an expensive way of lengthening your life because of the high cost of donations to demanding church treasurers.



'Twas The (Politically Correct) Night Before Christmas

"Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...
How to live in a world that's politically correct?
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves".
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves,
And labor conditions at the north pole
Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul.
Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety,
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society.



And equal employment had made it quite clear
That Santa had better not use just reindeer.
So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid,
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!
The runners had been removed from his sleigh;
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A.,
And people had started to call for the cops.
When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops.

Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened.
His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened."
And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows,
Rudolf was suing over unauthorized use of his nose
And had gone on Gerardo² in front of the nation,
Demanding millions in over-due compensation.
So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife,
Who suddenly said shed enough of this life,
Joined a self-help group, poached, and left in a whiz,
Demanding from now on her title was Ms.

And as for the gifts, why, he'd near had a notion
That mocking a choice could cause so much commotion,
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.
Nothing that might be construed to pollute.
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot.

Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.
 Nothing for just girls. Or just for the boys.
 Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.
 Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.
 No candy or sweets...they were bad for the tooth.
 Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.

And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,
 Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.
 For they raised the hackles of those psychological
 Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.
 No baseball, no football...someone could get hurt;
 Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.
 Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be posse;
 And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.

So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;
 He just could not figure out what to do next.
 He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,
 you've got to be careful with that word today.
 His socks were quite empty, limp to the ground;
 Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.
 Something special was needed, a gift that he might
 Give to all without angering the left or the right.



"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth."

1. EPA—Environmental Protection Agency in the USA
2. Gerardo : Confraternal 'kuk show' from American TV

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

Shelia Leel

All the Sunday School groups are busy learning about the Birth of Jesus, rehearsing for the Nativity and learning songs for the Family Service which is on the 23rd December at 11 am. It is always such an uplifting service we do hope you can join us.

IMPORTANT STUFF! The Christmas parties

Creche and Sportlers – is on Sunday 16th during the morning service.

All Stars and Trailblazers – are on 22nd from 5 – 7pm in the Morris Hall.

Santa has been invited to come along to both parties!

Lazer Group – instead of a party they are going to the Bowling Alley on the 16th December, leaving after the rehearsals at about 1pm.

There will be an all age Sunday School on the two Sundays during the festive period which is the 30th December and 6th January.

On behalf of all the Girls, Boys and Sunday School Teachers I wish you a very happy Christmas and good wishes for 2008.

Happy Birthday to you!

We would like wish a happy birthday to the girls and boys who have registered with our Sunday School.

To the girls and boys who celebrated their birthday from the beginning of September when the Sunday school returned after the school summer holidays, we hope you had a wonderful time!

They are : Creche – Edith Yang Yang on the 28th September

All Stars – Mark Copewell – 4th December, 7years

Treilblazers – Katie Thomas – 23rd September, 9years

Tommy Walkingshaw – 24th Sept., 8years

Douglas Gourlay – 28th Sept., 9years

Poppy Jasper – 27th October, 8years

Beth Moyes – 28th Oct., 8years

Lazer Group – Rebecca Gourlay – 28th August, 11years

David Campbell – 8th September, 11years

Kristen Mullen – 30th October, 11years.

Looking ahead, we would like to wish a very happy birthday to all the girls and boys who will celebrate a birthday between now and the next Outlook, which will be due just before Easter.

They are ; Creche – Alex Stiller – 23rd March, 2years

All Stars – Kathryn Gourlay – 19th Dec., 5years

Rosie Jasper – 22nd January, 7years

Erin Moyes – 2nd March, 7years

Emma Page – 12th March, 7years

Grace Moyes – 17th "

Treilblazers – Leigh Cui – 9th January, 9years

Sarah Carstairs – 18th Jan., 9years

Lazer group – Jonathan Hoynes – 21 st January, 11years

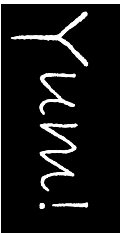
Christopher Hoynes – 21 Jan., 11years.

All children from 0 – 12years are welcome to come along to our Creche and Sunday School at any time.

Jesus said "let the children come."

Some years ago, I saw a caravan with the notice "Parents! Don't send your children to Sunday School—take them!

Why not give it a try.



Real Irish Christmas Pud

Servings: 8 – 10 per pudding. Recipe makes 2 x 2 pint puddings

Level of difficulty: Easy

Cooking Time: 4 – 5 hours, plus 1 hour on Christmas Day
Best made several months in advance to allow the flavours to develop.

Ingredients: for the puddings:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| * 8oz self raising flour | * zest of 1 orange |
| * 8oz white breadcrumbs | * 2 lbs mixed fruit, eg |
| * pinch salt | * 12oz sultanas |
| * 3 tsp mixed spice | * 10oz currants |
| * 1½ tsp nutmeg | * 10oz raisins |
| * 9oz soft brown sugar | * 3oz mixed peel |
| * 9oz suet | * ½pint Guinness |
| * 1 medium desert apple (eg COX),
peeled & grated | * 1 egg |

1. The night before you want to make the puddings put all the fruit, including the orange zest and mixed peel, into a large mixing bowl. Pour over the ale and mix. Cover with cling film and leave to soak overnight.
2. Next day, ¼ fill two large pots with water and put on to boil. Place a saucer into each pot.
3. Grease the inside of the two pudding basins with butter.
4. Meanwhile, mix all the remaining ingredients with the soaked fruit. Split the mixture between the two pudding basins. Cover and simmer for 4 to 5 hours.
5. Remove the lids from the basins and allow the puddings to cool down. When cold, replace the lids and store in a cool dark place until Christmas.
6. On Christmas Day, simply heat the pudding up by simmering it for an hour or so before turning it out on to a warm plate, drenching it with brandy and setting it alight prior to serving it with fresh cream, brandy flavoured cream or custard.



CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

"I am the resurrection and the life."

Deaths

26th February – Rosemary Sinclair
 19th March – Robert Paterson
 20th March – Barbara Shooter
 19th April – William Martin Lawrenson
 20th April – Frances Louise Ross
 23rd April – Janet (Nettie) Drylie
 20th May – Sally Cochrane
 23rd May – David Russell
 24th June – Margaret Fowls
 29th August – Eric Evans
 31st August – William Edward Cunningham
 5th September – Ross Renwick
 5th September – Oliver William (Bill) Bell

We remember all these families in our prayers



LIFE & WORK—December Issue

Christianity is not a religion

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, George Wilkie argues that his great contribution was the abolition of religion.

Baptism or blessing?

In 'The Last Word' Muriel Armstrong calls on the Church to rethink the rules on Baptism.

...and so much more—reserve your copy now.

Who do I call?



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Property convener	Maurreen Black	881872
Gifts Aid	Janis Foster	731565
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St. Leonard's Parish Church is a congregation of
The Church of Scotland.

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.STLEONARDSPARISHCHURCH.ORG.UK