

St Catherine's Argyle Parish Church

News from the Kirk Session

Advent 2021

LETTER FROM REV DAVID CLARKSON

Hello, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is David Clarkson and I'm the minister of Barclay Viewforth Church. At the moment I'm also what is known as the Interim Moderator of St Catherine's Argyle Church. Because the congregation has no minister the Presbytery appoints someone (me in this case) to 'look after' it. There are some things that only an ordained minister can do and that's my role. I also need to make sure that services and other things such as visiting are being done. Often this would be the job of a Locum – someone who would lead Sunday services, take funerals etc and so on. So I will work with the Kirk Session to consider this or to try and manage with a group of different people taking turns leading worship each week.



During Advent (the four weeks leading up to Christmas) we're part of a conspiracy (a plan) to remember what Christmas is about. Why not come and find out how you can be involved too? We want to leave behind the habits of spending more, eating more, drinking more and getting more. Christmas is about Jesus and this year we want to do it differently. We want to:



LETTER FROM REV DAVID CLARKSON (cont'd)

Worship Fully.

It starts with Jesus. It ends with Jesus. This is a season where love wins, peace reigns and a King is celebrated.

Spend Less.

That doesn't mean that we won't spend anything at Christmas – just consider buying one gift fewer and give your time instead.

Give More.

Give more of your time, energy, and presence. We'll be people who give more relationally to those we love – so take your kids sledging, watch old Christmas films with friends, or make a gift.

Love All.

Jesus became poor to love the forgotten, the sick and the oppressed. He reached out to the margins. By spending less at Christmas, we have the opportunity to honour him by giving resources to those who need it most.

We would love it if you'd like to come along and join in. We're not having many services in the church over Christmas time but we want to encourage you to visit one of our neighbouring churches to join their Christmas celebrations:

Friday 24 December, Christmas Eve

Family service at [Reid Memorial Church](#) - 4.00pm

Christingle at [Priestfield Parish Church](#) - 4.30pm

Watchnight service at [Craigmillar Park Church](#) - 11.15pm

Saturday 25 December, Christmas Day 10.30am

Short and interactive Christmas morning service in our own building ([St Catherine's Argyle Parish Church](#))

Sunday 26 December, Boxing Day

Sunday service – Please visit a local congregation – possibly the above or [Marchmont St Giles Parish Church](#) or [Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church](#) or [Morningside United Church](#)

Many of you will be wondering what is going to happen to the congregation over the next few months. In the medium term, things will continue as they are at the moment. Every congregation in the Presbytery is waiting to receive a copy of a plan that will be used to shape the future of ministry in Edinburgh. Unfortunately that plan is not available yet. Even when it is issued, it will be a draft and there will be many months of discussion and debate ahead. The final plan must be submitted by December 2022. It is important to be honest about these things. The Presbytery faces a large reduction in the number of ministries it is allowed to have, which means that many congregations face the prospect of linkages or unions. (Other forms of church have not been agreed by the General Assembly and the nature of 'hub' churches is unclear.) I cannot be sure, but I strongly suspect that your congregation will be one of those that will be expected to join with another congregation. We have been asked to be innovative in our thinking and planning. Every congregation is part of a cluster of churches that are working together to try to determine a way forward that maintains effective mission in our communities. Unions and linkages do not always achieve that well, so there is space for you to 'think outside the box'.

I appreciate that may not be the news you hoped to hear, but I remind you that Advent is a time of hope. Jesus was born and we celebrate that amazing gift. We believe that one day He will return and take us home to be with Him. Until then we play our part in his church – whichever congregation (or denomination) he calls us to serve in – so that others can hear the Good News for themselves. Have a blessed Christmas and New Year.

David Clarkson

LETTER FROM REV STUART IRVIN

My thanks to all the folks at St Catherine's Argyle and those in the community who wished me well as I finished my time with you. The kindness that was shown to my family and I as we finished our time in Edinburgh was humbling and uplifting.

After my last Sunday on the 21st the movers came the next day to start packing in order to move us west on the Tuesday. Everything went pretty smoothly, however, on the Tuesday evening as everything was getting unpacked and we were settling in for our first night in Torrance we had still to find our plates and forks! Thankfully someone from the church was able to lend us some until we found our own!

The service of Induction on the Thursday Evening went well and it was nice to have a representation from St Catherine's Argyle through for the service and to have Martin Fair there too, all the way down from Arbroath.



We are starting to find our feet (and cutlery!) and with my first Sunday under my belt and I am starting to learn the pattern of ministry in Torrance Parish Church.

Once again, thanks; for all the prayerful support, and encouragement as we have embarked on this new chapter.

God Bless

Stuart Irvin



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