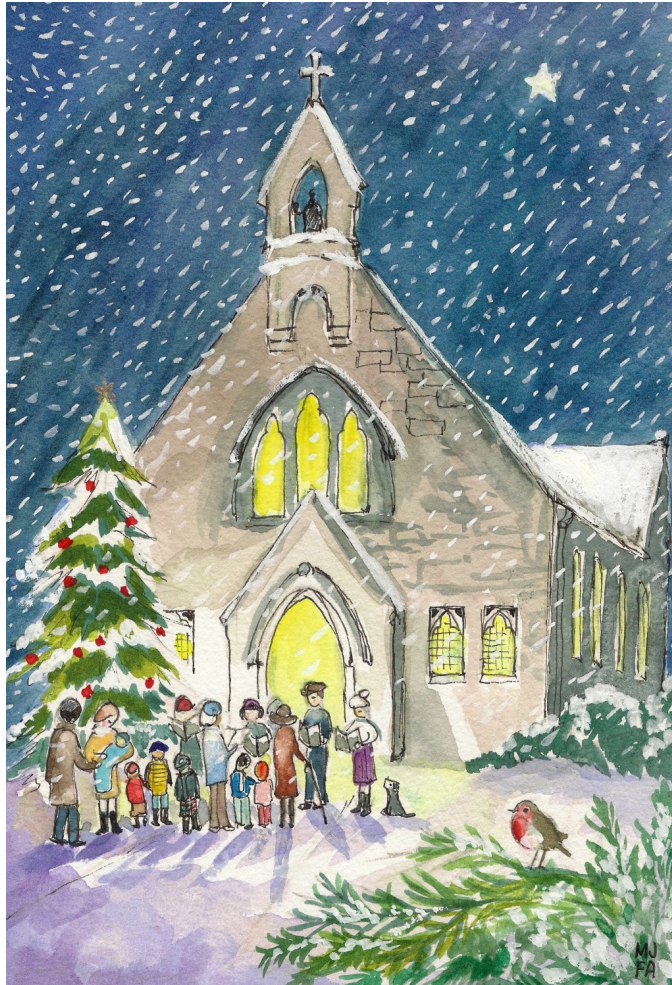


Ferintosh

Parish Church



Ferintosh Focus

Church Newsletter

December 2017

Serving the communities of Canon Bridge & Maryburgh
www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk



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As always, we welcome any comments, questions or suggestions about the newsletter. Submissions are now invited for the next edition of the Focus - these can be made to members of the editorial team, or sent by email to strathdrynie@gmail.com

A full-colour copy of this newsletter is also available online at ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk



Contents

“The ultimate factor in the church’s engagement with society is the church’s engagement with God”

This quote from Os Guinness is wonderfully underlined by nearly every article in this edition of the Focus! Again and again you will see the importance of the prayer which backs up each service, activity, appeal and conversation. You’ll be able to follow a thread woven by God’s own word on the place of prayer in our lives and how to go about building our church’s reliance on the Lord – look out for the verses on each page.

Please keep the members of our congregation and wider community in your prayers this Christmas season. Thank God for the work he’s been doing in the parish and rejoice that the Church exists here to worship Him. Pray for the work of the Church in the lives of those who are most vulnerable locally, nationally and further afield. Look forward, expectantly, to the return of Jesus to the Earth again.

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. (Psalm 95:6-7)

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Christmas

A SAVIOR IS BORN



Christmas Services at Ferintosh Parish Church

17th December	11am - Nativity Service 6.30pm - Lessons and Carols Service
24th December	11am - Morning Service 11.30pm Watchnight Service
25th December	11am - Christmas Morning Family Service
7th January	11am - Communion Service

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. (Matthew 2:11)



Guild Updates

Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus (Ephesians 5:19-20)

Guild members from all over Scotland travelled on Friday 24th November to the Big Sing in Inverness East Parish Church. The Church was full of members and friends who had come to worship together and to make a joyful noise to the Lord.

The service consisted of ten hymns and Bible readings which the Leadership Team of the National Guild had chosen.

The tickets were in big demand and were free. The collection was going to Malawi. Five years ago, the Guild had helped to refurbish bedrooms in a teacher training college. When the visitors from Scotland went this year, they discovered that only half of the accommodation was being used due to a lack of water. Therefore the collection this time would be donated to help sink another water bore so that more girls may become teachers in a safe environment.

Current Guild Projects have raised the astounding sum of £509,836.09 over the last two and a half years. The projects to benefit are Street Pastors, Care for the Family, Feed the Minds, Mission International, Christian Aid and Prospects.

If you haven't tried the Guild, why not come along. We meet on the first Monday of the month in the Church Hall, sometimes in the afternoon and sometimes evening. Keep an eye on the Order of Service for news of the next meeting.

This year's theme is "Go in Love".





The Treasure Box

When we think of Christmas we turn instinctively to the story as we have it in the gospel of St. Luke. The graphic hillside scene as the shepherds watched their flocks. It was dark and strange things that happen in the dark, none stranger than that which happened to the shepherds. An Angel of the Lord appeared, there was light all about them and they were afraid. The Angel allayed their fears and there was amazement and joy. The Angel was joined by a choir of Angels and the news was turned into music. The choir sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased".



That, I am sure, will be the theme of sermons and songs this Christmas. That is great but let us not forget the quieter, more prosaic visitation of an Angel to Joseph. The record is in the first chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. The Angel said to Joseph "you shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins".

That is the key to unlock the treasure box which is the Christmas story. "God is for us" and then the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah – "His name shall be Emmanuel" (which means God with us). God for us, God with us, these words unlock the door into the fullness of life.

Yes there is great joy all wrapped up with the Babe of Bethlehem. No wonder the shepherds went home rejoicing!

Roddie MacKinnon



A Model for Prayer

Although we know that we should, and can, pray; it's something many of us need help with! This article, shared by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, may have some tips.

There is no formula to prayer - it is simply conversing with God. It is essentially talking with God as you would talk with an earthly parent who loves you and wants the best for you. God is your heavenly Father who loves you perfectly.

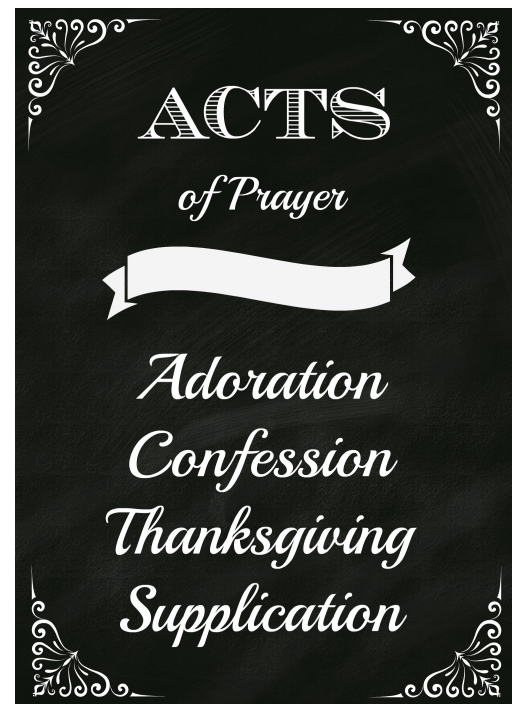
The **ACTS model** will be helpful to you as you learn how to pray. ACTS stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication.

- Adoration means worship. We encourage you to begin your time of prayer by adoring and praising God. Praise Him for who He is and for all that He has done for you. God delights in your praises!

- Confession, the next component, means agreeing with God about the things that you have done wrong. It's a time to express sorrow about what you have said, thought, or done that is not pleasing to Him. Ask God to forgive you for these things, and then believe that He does so freely. When you confess your sins, you receive God's cleansing and this helps to remove any barrier in your communication with Him (read 1 John 1:9).

- Thanksgiving basically means being thankful to God. Thank Him for His love, protection, and provision just to name a few things.

- Supplication is the final component, and this means praying for your needs and for the needs of others, such as friends, family, your pastor, missionaries, government leaders, and persecuted Christians around the world. You may want to pray for such things as God's guidance, wisdom, and opportunities to serve.



Keep in mind that the ACTS model serves as a guide to help you, not a rigid formula to follow. There is no "canned" approach that you need to take; just talk from your heart. There are additional steps that will help. Set aside a specific time to pray each day.

Pick a quiet place where you can be alone with God. You will also find a special blessing if you begin your time by reading the Bible. Select a passage to read (download a Bible reading plan) and spend some time thinking about it deeply. Reflect on what God is impressing on your heart to you through the passage.

Ask God to help you apply what you are learning. God wants you to share your heart with Him, and He wants to share His heart with you - this can take place anytime, day or night!

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

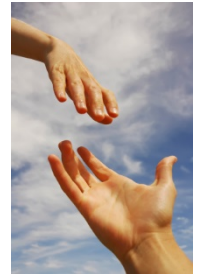
If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. Matthew 21:22



Church Groups

The **Pastoral Care Team** is a small group of dedicated people who help people to get to appointments, visit family or have a home visit. We continue to visit those in Care Homes when they can no longer live in their own homes.

Thanks go to those who give their time to do this much appreciated service. We realise not everyone can give their time in this way but we do really appreciate your remembering the Team in your prayers as they carry out this welcome service.

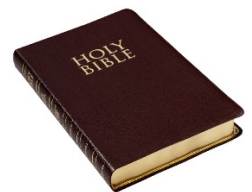


The blood life of the Church is Prayer and the Team needs your prayers so that it can carry out the work and volunteering it does.

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The ladies meet each Wednesday in the Church hall from 1.30pm for approximately one hour. We have Bible notes to assist in our studies which we take home to read some background and read relevant passages from the Bible.

This term we have been looking more closely at the book of Daniel in the Old Testament. Jesus himself often quoted this book. The studies are entitled "Living Boldly for God".



We are now in the season of Advent and are using the Cover to Cover series entitled "A Child is Born" written by Abby Guinness. These help us to take a fresh look at the coming of Christ into the world. After Christmas we will resume the study on 10th January when we may take time to study "Living a Life of True Worship" from Precept Ministries International. We are missing Esmary Neilson and Mary Wallace from the group, each having moved, one to sheltered accommodation and the other to a Care Home. We wish them both well.

This is a welcoming group and we'd love to have more people come along. Do think prayerfully about this even if you can't commit to every week.

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The Flower Team would like to thank everyone who has been involved this past year with the Sunday flowers, the Easter daffodils and the Harvest Thanksgiving. We are very grateful for all your help in any way and I am sure the congregation appreciates the beautiful displays. At the time of writing there are still a couple of spaces left in the 2018 Flower Calendar. If you could possibly help with the flowers, please do contact Jeannette Cameron (01463 870416). It is not necessary, though always welcome, to do the weekly flowers in an arrangement. There are a selection of vases available in the annex of the church. If possible, please try to avoid using lilies as some people can be allergic to them. The flowers/arrangement can be uplifted following the services and are yours to keep/distribute as you wish. Donations are also always welcome towards our Flower Fund which can help with our larger events.





Local Missions

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Seaforth House

We were happy to help out the Free Church recently by covering their slot in leading worship at Seaforth House. Our theme was to *Pray About Everything*, taking our text Philippians 4:6. After a question and answer session about where and when we can pray, our Ferintosh volunteers and the residents worked to put together the individual words 'Do not worry about everything but pray and ask God about everything'. We put this into practice as we asked the residents what they would like prayer for and used the prayer shawl while we prayed for the various requests. We remembered the outside world too as we used our globe to find countries to pray for. Each resident took a card to remind them we can pray any time.

In December we intend to hold our Nativity service with them. It would be more difficult to hold a service there were it not for those from Ferintosh who come along. The residents like to see new people who can chat with them, so feel free to join us anytime. *Irene*

As winter has really set in, it is more and more obvious that decisions have to be made in some households. Do we heat or eat? Sadly this is when the call on the **Highland Foodbank** is at its height. People would rather not resort to foodbanks and would love to have enough each month to provide for their families but sometimes, through no fault of their own, they just don't manage to make ends meet.

This is how you can help. Just add an item or two in your shopping basket and put them in the container in the annex of the Church.

Thank you for your great generosity in the past and keep it coming, please.



Please help local people in crisis by donating items from the list below.

Thank you!

- * Milk (UHT or powdered)
- * Sugar (500g)
- * Long Life Fruit Juice
- * Pasta Sauces
- * Cereals
- * Rice Pudding (Tinned)
- * Tinned Potato
- * Rice
- * Tinned Fish
- * Corned Beef
- * Tinned Ham
- * Tinned Mince/Stew
- * Tinned Fruit
- * Jam
- * Biscuits or snack bars

Part of the work



Scottish Charity Number 021848

 **3,245**

three-day emergency food supplies
given to people in crisis last year

 **1 IN 5**

of the UK population live below the
poverty line



National Missions

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. (Psalm 100:4)

In the news in brief in the latest **CrossReach** Magazine (a few still available at the back of the Church) it stated that the present Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Derek Browning, has made the main theme of his time with CrossReach mental health and visited services which offer perinatal mental health support, plus places which offer touching points with people such as drop-in centres.

In May, eighteen brave people including two former Moderators abseiled down the 165 foot drop from the top of the Forth Bridge to raise money for CrossReach's children and family services. The fantastic news is they raised £26,000 to support children and families around Scotland.

There was an exhibition in July in the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh of "Heart for Art" works. The exhibition was called "A Creative Approach to Dementia" and attracted thousands of visitors over its 8 day run. The organisers found it was a hugely powerful tool in generating discussion about dementia and creativity.

CrossReach is the social work arm of the Church and needs our support for its wonderful work.

Wee Ones at Whinnieknowe!

Aware of the shared care practice in the USA, Sarah Butters, Activities Coordinator at CrossReach's Whinnieknowe Care Home in Nairn, had the idea of inviting pre-school children into the Home to spend time playing with the residents.

On the 31st October, 6 little visitors made an enormous impact on their new friends. Over the space of an hour, they did craft activities together. Chatting about the materials they were using and instructing each other on how to make the best pictures, it seemed that no sooner had they arrived then it was time to go.





World Missions

Harvest Thanksgiving: Following the appeal in the last edition of Ferintosh Focus, the congregation responded magnificently by donating almost £300 to the Elderly Feeding Programme of the Viyele Congregation in Malawi. Still pictures and a video clip by Bob Baxter of Alba Aid brought the project to life, and everyone was stunned by the elderly folks' song and dance of thanksgiving for the meal they had received.

Jan Baxter wrote: "Warmest thanks for once again remembering and caring about the people in Northern Malawi. Your ongoing support for Viyele with its many elderly people is absolutely wonderful and so very much appreciated by them and us. Recent harvests have been so erratic with the change in the rains – El Nino effect – that the feeding programme has been extended to help whenever possible. God bless you all for bringing smiles to God's people."

As Christmas approaches, please remember to save your stamps for the **World Mission Council Used Stamp Appeal**. This year the money raised will go towards supplying books for theological training in the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan. This is currently being delivered in a refugee camp in Kenya, as the Church's premises are unusable due to the civil war still raging in this new country.

If you can, please leave a half inch margin round stamps, or at least ensure the perforations are intact and there are no tears. It is helpful if you can separate UK and foreign stamps. Stamps can be left in Church (in the red box in the annexe).

Many thanks, Janet Winchester (World Missions Team)

Christmas giving through Christian Aid

As Christians, looking forward to Christmas, we should be thinking of the joy of giving, not just to family and friends but if we are able to those who have very little to celebrate at this time of year:

Food for a refugee - for those now living in Greece £15 would provide a day's worth of food, three nutritious meals.

£8 would be sufficient to provide a couple of chickens for someone living with HIV in Zambia - this would create the means to provide a stable income by selling eggs.

YOU may not like earth worms, but farmers in Bangladesh would welcome a wormery to help fertilise their crops - £15

This Christmas, your donations will have twice the impact! For every pound you give, the UK government, through DFID - UK Department for International Development, will also give a pound.

Whatever you can afford, Christian Aid would welcome your kind contribution, and shown below are the ways you can make contact:

0333 555 2025 or www.presentaid.org

On behalf of Christian Aid THANK YOU & wishing you a peaceful festive season





Jingle Bells

Christmas is a season of bells. Why do we think of bells at Christmas? *Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way.* That happy little tune is loved by all little children and also by all of us who share in their happiness. Bells were rung to mark the coming of a king or queen to a town or village. Bells are also rung at weddings. Weddings are happy occasions.

In Kendall, in England, there is inscribed on one of the church bells the following words:

*"In wedlock bonds
All ye who join with hands
Your hearts unite
So, shall our tuneful tongues combine
To laud the nuptial rite".*

The word 'laud' means to praise, and 'nuptial' means marriage - or the marriage service. We also ring the Church bells to call people to worship. Worship is a glad time when we praise God for his goodness.

The word for bell and clock in French and German is the same. Bells were rung to call people to work and to mark the end of the working day. Now we use hooters or sirens which are not so tuneful. Bells were also used to warn of danger, of the noise of battle or of storms at sea. They were often used to summon help for those struggling with wild seas.

There are many kinds of bells and many uses for bells. Each has its own particular sound. Will you be a bell, this Christmas to ring out the good news that for us a saviour is born, who is Christ the King.

Roddie MacKinnon

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Ferintosh Youth Fellowship got off to rather an uncertain start this session for various reasons. However, we have met whenever there have been at least two young people present, and on other occasions have joined the congregation in Church. Themes we have tackled have included Making the Right Decision (Joshua, and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus), Listening to a Sermon (based on the sermon on the feeding of the 5000 on Communion Sunday), Holy Communion and Church membership, Martin Luther and the Reformation, and Freedom.

We have been following the process of calling a new Minister, and were in Church on December 3rd to hear Rev Macdonald and cast our votes.

We have been busy preparing for our stall at the Christmas coffee morning and for the nativity play.

We are missing Tommy McGregor, but are very grateful to the members of the congregation who have come along to help us (and make sure we comply with Safeguarding regulations). Special thanks to Shona Vance who shared with us some of her wealth of knowledge about the era of the Reformation, and to Roderick Urquhart who helped us to start thinking about what freedom means to us. Thanks also to all of you who pray for us and our work in FYF.

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. Matthew 21:22



This term at **Sunday Club** we have been thinking about being kind to others in the build up to Christmas. The children are doing chores at home for twenty pence, the money raised will help to buy chocolates for the congregation and community. Sunday Club and FYF collected lots of items for the Shoe Box Appeal which is being sorted and boxed up by our local volunteers at Maryburgh Church Hall.

The children and leaders have made some craft items which were sold on a stall at the Church Social coffee morning on Saturday 2nd December. We will also had face painting, tablet and children's books on sale.

We visited Wyvis House care home on Sunday 3rd December to play some carols on the bells.

The Family Nativity service is on 17th December and we will present a play and bell music.

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Ten Pin Bowling: Once again a most enjoyable evening was spent recently at Rollerbowl in Inverness, when 15 hardy souls braved the Winter elements and battled for the honour of "Winner". As before, shoes were changed, teams allocated and bowls were selected. Shouts of "well done" and "It's veered off into the channel again"! could be heard as the three teams concentrated on their play. There was a bit of jealousy when the youngsters had assistance from the "buffers" to keep their bowls on the straight and narrow. At the end of the evening the winning team comprising of Martin, Shona, Andrew, Mhairi and Janet M. were awarded their medals. The overall winner was Janet Murray with Janet Winchester "bringing up the rear". Once again, a great fun evening so watch this space for the next one!





Social Calendar

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

RIVER CAFE: This is held in the Church Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 2-3.30pm and gives the opportunity to enjoy some tea/coffee, home baking and the all important chat. A warm welcome awaits you.

If you are able/willing to provide some home baking on an occasional basis, please add your name to the list in church, or contact Janet Murray as your help and support would be most welcome.

FORTHCOMING DATES: Wednesdays 13th December, 10th January, 14th February, 14th March and 11th April

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SOUP LUNCHES: These are held in the Church Hall on the 1st Friday of the month throughout the Autumn/Winter starting at 12 noon. Why not join us for some delicious home-made soup, tea and biscuits? Instead of a speaker, we are trying a different format this session, which allows for more time together to chat. We look forward to welcoming you there.

FORTHCOMING DATES: Friday 2nd February and 2nd March

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BEETLE DRIVE: This will take place in the Church Hall on Saturday 10th February starting at 6.30pm. Further details will be available nearer the event.

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SUNDAY TEAS: It is encouraging to have so many people come together for tea/coffee following Morning Worship. Many thanks go to everyone who kindly provides the tea and biscuits etc. If you would be willing to help with this on an occasional basis, please add your name to the list, as your help would be most welcome and greatly appreciated.

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Many thanks go to everyone who supports the social events in any way as without your help and support, they could not take place. If you feel you would like to become more involved with these activities, please contact Janet Murray.



Scout Christmas Post

**Have your Christmas Cards delivered by
the 1st Conon Bridge & Maryburgh Scout
Group
for the very reasonable price of 15p per
card.**

**They will be delivering them within the
30mph signs in the villages of
Conon Bridge and Maryburgh.**

**Christmas Cards can be dropped off at
The Church Hall in Conon Bridge
or
Maryburgh Amenities Hall
(Combined with Maryburgh Brownies Christmas Fair)
Between 10am and 12noon
on
Saturday 9th December.
No post accepted after this date**

**Tea/Coffee with Mince Pie and Shortbread
on Sale throughout the morning**

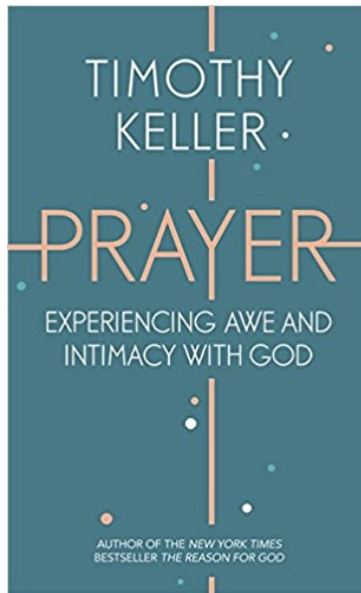
Same day delivery not guaranteed.
For more information contact Corinna 867880 or Lauren 863794





Book Review

Prayer – Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God by Timothy Keller



Tim Keller is one of those authors whose writing is easy to absorb but is instructional and challenging. A review won't do this book justice! You will just have to read the book for yourself but I will just give a few quotes to give you a flavour:

'Language is intrinsic to personal relations therefore there is every reason to expect that God communicates with words.'

If the affections of the heart are not engaged in prayer, then real character change and growth in Christ-likeness are impossible and we cannot settle for less.

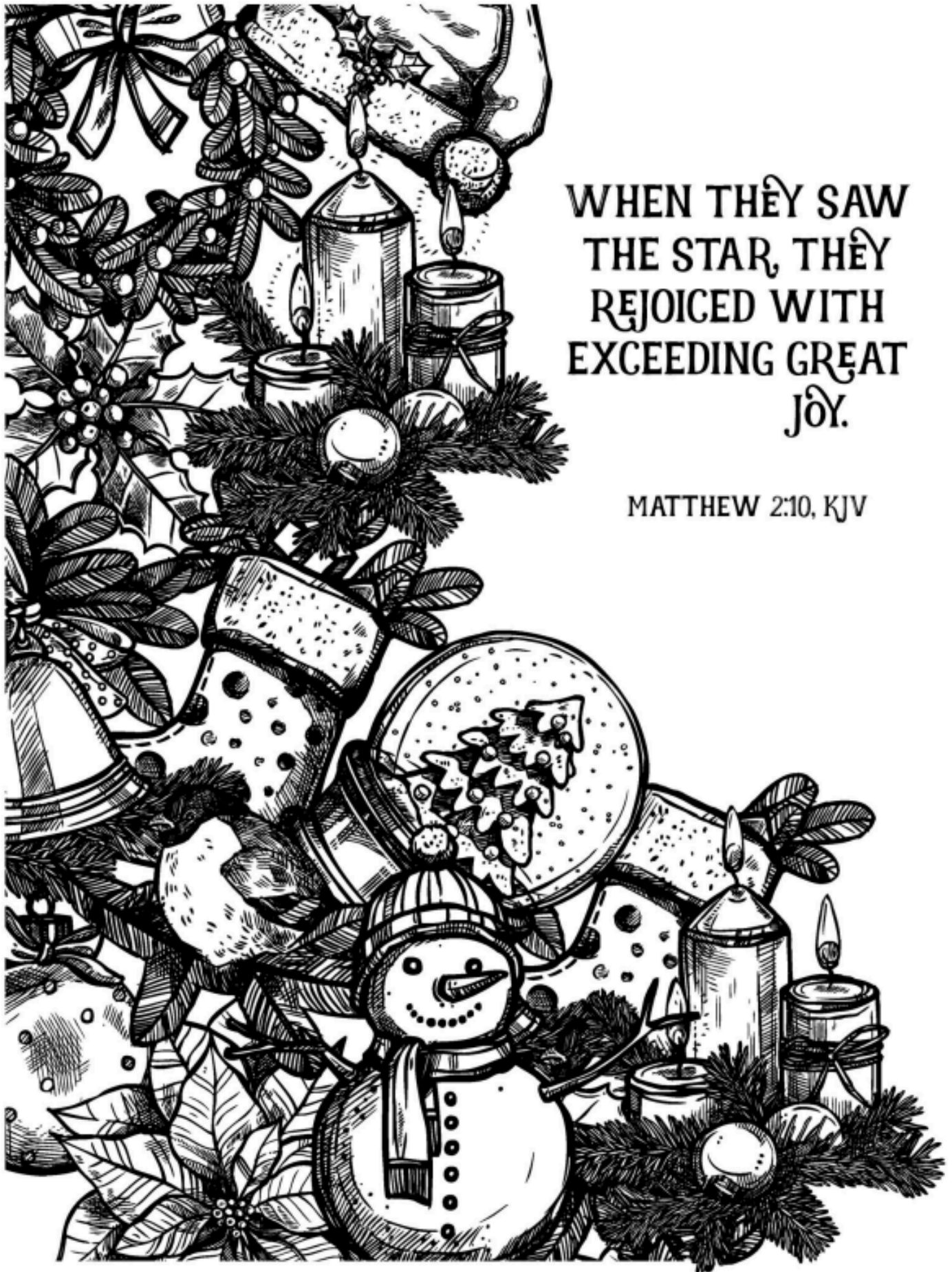
He quotes from Eugene Peterson (of the Message version) 'we should plunge ourselves into the sea of God's language, the Bible. We should listen, study, think, reflect and ponder the Scriptures until there is an answering response in our hearts and minds'.

Keller reiterates this stating that it is only in the language of the Bible that we will learn to pray. He doesn't just leave it there but gives lots of practical application, and appropriately for the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, he summarises Martin Luther's 'A Simple Way to Pray'.

He reminds us that 'in prayer we glorify God and in glorifying God, He is inviting us to enjoy him'. (Keller is quoting from what he calls the Scotch(!) Catechism.)

'Prayer demonstrates our total dependency upon God and in the long term is the greatest source of power that is possible.'

A must to read and maybe a good Christmas present also?



WHEN THEY SAW
THE STAR, THEY
REJOICED WITH
EXCEEDING GREAT
JOY.

MATTHEW 2:10, KJV



Ferintosh Parish Church meets at 11am and 6.30pm each Sunday.

Our friendly and welcoming congregation is made up of those from Conon Bridge, Maryburgh and the surrounding area. Crèche (for those of pre-school age), Sunday Club and FYF meet during the morning service. Tea and coffee are served in the Church Hall at the close of worship.

You are invited to join us and we pray that you will experience a real sense of God's blessing during your time with us.

Church Flowers

January

7 th	Organiser – Mrs M Wilson
14 th	Mrs S Chalmers
21 st	Mrs J McCulloch
28 th	Mrs M Wilson
	Mrs C Allison

February

4 th	Organiser –
11 th	Mrs K Campbell
18 th	Mrs J Steele
25 th	Mrs MacKinnon
	Mrs E Munro

March

4 th	Organiser – Mrs P Chata
11 th	Mrs S MacKenzie
18 th	Mrs P Chata
25 th	Mrs C Parry
	Mrs I Thomson

Church Welcome

January

Welcome	Count
John Smith	John Smith
Isabel MacDonald	Mhairi MacKenzie

February

Roderick Urquhart	Roderick Urquhart
Elizabeth Blackburn	Elizabeth Blackburn
	Jim Bremner

Church Register

Funerals

23 October 2017	Mr. Douglas James Forsyth
25 October 2017	Mr. Donald MacLeod
4 December 2017	Ms. Marion Smith

Baptism

22 October 2017	Alice Lena Smith
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