

LONGNIDDRY CHURCH MAGAZINE DECEMBER 2019 – JANUARY 2020

Minister: Rev Dr Robin Hill

Services for December and January

All services are at Longniddry Parish Church unless otherwise stated.

1 st December	9.45am: All-age Communion (Robin Hill) 11am: Quiet Communion (Robin Hill) 6.30pm: Advent Reflection and Communion (Robin Hill)
4 th December	12 noon: Wednesday Thought and Midweek Communion (Robin Hill)
8 th December	9.45am: Family service (Robin Hill) 4pm: Family Carol Service (Robin Hill and friends)
15 th December	9.45am: “Christmas Jumper service” (Robin Hill)
21 st December	7pm: Longest Night Bereavement Service (Robin Hill) (<i>see over</i>)
22 nd December	9.45am: Service of Nine Lessons and Carols
24 th December	7pm: Christmas Eve family service (Robin Hill) 9 for 9.30pm: “Carols by Candlelight” at Gladsmuir Parish Church (Robin Hill)
25 th December	10.30am: Joint Christmas Day Celebration! (Robin Hill)
29 th December	11am: “Great American Songbook Christmas” joint service at Gladsmuir Parish Church (Worship Team)
5 th January	11am: “Souper Sunday” service and lunch (<i>please note time</i>)
8 th January	12 noon: Wednesday Thought and Midweek Communion
12 th January	9.45am: All-age worship (Robin Hill)
19 th January	9.45am: All-age worship (Robin Hill)
26 th January	9.45am: All-age worship (Robin Hill)

THROUGH THE YEAR WITH ROBIN

One of the standard “bah humbug” grumps and gripes of good church folk in the month of December concerns the use of the term “Xmas” in place of “Christmas”. The complaint runs something along these lines: “How dare they!” (whoever “they” are). “Taking Christ out of Christmas, leaving a shoddy, third rate abbreviation: it’s cheap, it’s lazy, and it’s just *not done!*”

If you have steam pouring out your ears over this, calm down: you should definitely choose a more important cause to get angry about. Here’s why.

In the Greek language of the early Church *chi* (or “X”) is the first letter in the word “Christ”. More than this, the first Christians used the letter “X” as a secret symbol to show that they were part of this new community of faith.

There may be other things at play here too, appropriate to our own time. The letter “X” is undeniably a kind of cross, and also, of course, a symbol of love used on our letters, cards and messages. With these thoughts in mind, “Xmas” seems not only allowable but actually very appropriate.

The reality is that the messages contained in the birth, death and Resurrection of Jesus are very closely linked, sharing a common theme that God comes near in the person of the serving, suffering Christ, who demonstrates a heavenly love which more than meets our earthly needs.

For that very reason, the final hymn of our Nine Lessons and Carols Service on Sunday 22nd December will be one that comes from the season of Easter, but could definitely be sung at this time of year. It’s called, “Away with gloom”, and it’s a great song for this time of year.

Join us throughout December to engage with the Gospel truth of Emmanuel: “God with us.”

And when it comes, have a Merry Christmas (or maybe even Xmas).

Robin

SINGING GROUP

Our popular Singing Group will continue until Monday 9th December. We meet at 2pm to sing followed by tea, coffee and chat at 2.45pm. Expect lots of fun Christmas songs! We hope to see old and new friends - please come along.

THE ART OF ADVENT

Most of our services in the lead-up to Christmas will be focusing on Advent themes as found in some exciting artworks. These include: an Ethiopian cave painting of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; a modern portrait of the baby Jesus and his mum by Chinese artist He Qi; Rembrandt’s moving depiction of Jeremiah mourning over Jerusalem; and Leonardo’s sketch of Mary with her family. (Even Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will be getting into the artistic theme!)

Join us on Sundays at 9.45am throughout Advent to learn how art can inform our spiritual journey towards the birth of Christ. And if you want to get a head start, buy yourself a copy of Jane Williams’s excellent book, *The Art of Advent*, the inspiration and key source for this thought-provoking series.

FAMILY CAROL SERVICE

Our annual Sunday afternoon Family Carol Service is set for Sunday 8th December at 4pm when once again the Longniddry Church band will be accompanying the congregation in some bright and lively seasonal singing.

The service is designed for people of all ages, with families warmly invited to join in the fun.

Come along and get your festive season under way in style with a really lovely carol service.

As in previous years, an offering to benefit the wonderful work of Muirfield Riding Therapy will be taken. Festive refreshments will be served afterwards.

CHRISTMAS JUMPER SERVICE

Sunday 15th December at 9.45am sees our second Christmas Jumper Service, when everyone will be encouraged to wear a festive pullover. Whether you buy, beg or borrow a seasonal sweater (no stealing, please) just put it on, come along and get into the spirit of Christmas. Festive shirts, ties, socks are also good alternatives.

This all-age service will be suitable for everyone – even if you can’t find Christmas clothing on the day!

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

This year’s special service for those who have lost a loved one (whether recently or some time back) will take place on Saturday 21st December at 7pm. All are invited to come along a little earlier to write a message in our book of remembrance. The short act of worship will be simple: just a few words, some

background music, and an opportunity to reflect quietly in the stillness. Anyone wishing to light a candle during the service will be welcome to do so.

If this is something which you feel would be helpful to you, then do join us on the 21st. If you would like further information, just ring Robin on 853195.

SOUPER SUNDAY

Sunday 5th January is the date for Longniddry's "Souper Sunday", the day in the year when our church service has a special focus upon HIV in our world. As ever, the act of worship **at 11am** will be followed by a simple lunch of soup and bread, at which all attending will be invited to make a contribution to the work of the Church of Scotland HIV Programme.

All are welcome. (Please note that our 9.45am Sunday service will resume the following week, on Sunday 12th January.)

BURNS CONCERT AND SUPPER

Kick off your new year with a special concert on Saturday 18th January by Fife-based singer-songwriter Bruce Davies. Reflecting on two themes (the songs of the Bard of Alloway and looking forward into the new year) Bruce will be offering us his wonderful singing and good humour.

As part of the festivities, haggis, neeps and tatties will be served as a teatime treat.

Given the darkness of January, the event will kick off at 4pm, so that we'll be ready to eat when the music stops.

Further details will follow in the new year!

SECOND SATURDAY COFFEE COFFEE CUP PIC PLEASE

The usual coffee mornings will take place on Saturdays 14th December, and 11th January, from 10am-12noon, in the Church Hall. All welcome. Books will also be for sale.

THE GUILD

Our final get together for 2019 is on Wednesday 18th December when Christmas Lunch will take place in Longniddry Golf Club at 12.30pm for 1pm. Christmas Jumpers are optional! Anyone requiring transport please contact Alison Ferguson on 852442.

Our first meeting of the new year will be held in the church on Wednesday 15th January at 7 30 pm. Gillian Couper will tell us about the work of the Grassmarket Project, both at home in Edinburgh and recently in Africa. All are welcome to this meeting. For more information, contact Mary Barron on 853830.

WWII STORIES

We are looking for a few people to be interviewed about either their experiences or those of their parents/grandparents during WW2 to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the end of the war. Pupils from Preston Lodge would like to come and have a chat and record an interview, to be made into a film. If you would like to assist, please call Sheena Munro on 852856.

SCOUT POST

The Scouts will once again be operating the "**Scout Post**" service for the delivery of Christmas cards to addresses **WITHIN** the village only. Please make sure that cards are correctly addressed as the Group cannot be held responsible for the non-delivery of incorrectly addressed cards.

Cards can be handed in outside the local shops on Saturdays 7th and 14th December between 10am and 1pm. The cost per card is 30p. All cards will be delivered on or after Sunday 15th December. Thank you and Merry Christmas.

GET READY FOR WINTER!

With the weather turning decidedly chilly, it is time to start getting ready. There are lots of ways you could be affected by severe weather so this year people and businesses across Scotland are being

encouraged to consider if they are ready for winter and to think about what they can do to make sure they are prepared for severe weather or a prolonged icy snap.

Even relatively small disruptions can have serious consequences, but by taking action now you can lessen the impact. There are straight-forward practical steps you can take to reduce the likelihood of trouble occurring.

We all need to consider how we and our neighbours could be affected this winter. You can get involved by sharing information, by making plans, by taking action and by visiting www.readyscotland.org.

NATIVITY TREASURE TRAIL

On Saturday 14th December, at 4pm there will be a Nativity Treasure Trail. Get your map and register at the church from 3.30pm. Everyone welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult. Prizes to be won! Hot chocolate and marshmallows will be served at the church at the end of the trail. Free entry.

INNER WHEEL COFFEE MORNING

Our coffee morning will be held on Saturday 18th January, 10am-12noon in the church halls.

Please come and join us for coffee and home baking, served in style to celebrate Inner Wheel Day! All proceeds to East Lothian Young Carers. Tickets £3 from Ros Stewart (852003) and Val Easton (852002).

CHURCH DIARY

CHURCH DUTIES

December 1st – Communion. December 8th – A Ferguson, Mrs Morrison, Mrs Barron. December 15th – Mrs Cunningham, Mrs Hardy, M Jones, Dr Lucietti. December 22nd – Mrs Condie, I Coutts, F Elliott, Mrs Jones. December 29th – Service at Gladsmuir. January 5th – Mrs Coutts, J Jamieson, Mrs Peart, Dr Reeks. January 12th – G Smillie, W Hall, Mrs Leakey, Mrs Cowern. January 19th – B Lewis, J D McGregor, Mrs Reilly, T Shearer. January 26th – C Simpson, D Wyllie, I Smith, R Sharp. February 2nd – Mrs Munro, J Reilly, M Wood, Mrs Moore.

CHURCH FLOWERS

December 1st – Mrs Reeks. December 8th – Mrs Morrison. December 15th and 22nd – Christmas Arrangements. December 29th – Service at Gladsmuir. January 5th – Mrs M Devlin. January 12th – Mrs F Black. January 19th – Mrs J McGregor. January 26th – Mrs D Murray.

THE PRAYER GROUP will meet at 11am in the Gathering Space, in the church, on Wednesdays until December 11th. All welcome.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

All contributions for the **February 2020** issue of the church magazine should be given to the editor, in writing or by email, by **SUNDAY 12th JANUARY**.

VILLAGE ROUND UP

LIBRARY EVENTS

We are galloping towards the festive season and if you have children or grandchildren the excitement will be mounting! It's also a time to reflect on the year and look forward to new challenges in the year to come. It has been a busy year in the Library and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our readers and users of the Library for their support. We are very fortunate to serve such a wonderful community. To show our appreciation we would like to adopt the Icelandic tradition of *Jolabokaflod*, which translates roughly to "Christmas book flood" in English.

Jolabokafloð started during World War II, when paper was one of the few things not rationed in Iceland. Because of this, Icelanders gave books as gifts on Christmas Eve. The recipients sat down comfortably with a mug of cocoa and read their new book. From 16th December we will give the gift of a book to everyone that comes to the library in the hope that people will take time to sit and read or share stories with their children on Christmas Eve.

To get further into the festive spirit we are having Christmas Crafts for children on Saturday 7th December 11am – 12 noon, there may even be sparkly slime making!

It's 'Wear your Christmas Jumper Day' on Friday 13th December so our Bookbug session at 10.30am will hopefully be filled with festive jumpers. We will be supporting CHAS so will be grateful for any contributions to a very worthwhile cause.

Our Christmas Bedtime storytime will be on Monday 16th December at 6pm. Bring your little ones to the Library dressed for bed – pyjamas, dressing gown, onesie, slippers, blanket and teddy, ready for some stories by the Christmas tree, followed by milk and cookies. Please contact the Library on 01875 818160 to reserve a place and advise us of any dietary requirements.

There will be a storytime for tots on Tuesday 3rd December and Tuesday 7th January, at 10.30am.

Bookbug sessions for babies and children under 5 are every Friday morning at 10.30am. They will restart on Friday 10th January after the Christmas break.

During December we are having an exhibition of handmade jewellery.

We are having a special Bookbug session on Wednesday 15th January, at 2.30pm at the Wednesday Club. It would be lovely if parents/grandparents could come along to the Church Hall with their little ones and join the young and young at heart for songs, rhymes and stories. This really is a wonderful afternoon. For more information please contact the Library.

The Lego Club will continue on Friday afternoons 3-4pm until 20th December then resume Friday 10th January.

The Knit and Natter Group meet on Tuesday mornings, 11am-1pm. Don't sit on your own at home, come along for a cuppa and a natter. You don't need to knit, sew or crochet, just enjoy the company.

During January there will be an exhibition and display of model spitfires that took part in the 'Raid of the Forth' during WW2.

A reminder that the Library will close 4pm on Tuesday 24th December and reopen on Friday 3rd January at 10am, so come along and stock up on books for the festive holiday.

Fiona, Liz, Rachael and Ann would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2020.

S.W.I.

The WI will have their Christmas Meal in the Longniddry Inn on Wednesday 11th December at 6.30pm.

Members are asked to bring along a small parcel for the lucky dip. On Wednesday 8th January our meeting will be in the church hall at 7.30pm. Tine Breusch will talk about Pilates. The competition is the carnation or snowdrop in any medium.

WOMEN'S AID HELP

Preston Lodge High School is collecting toiletries, sanitary products, toothbrushes etc to donate to the local branch of Women's Aid. The Christmas period is a time when domestic violence increases, and many women have to flee their homes without basic provisions. Please hand any items in to the school office by Tuesday 10th December.

FRANK'S FOLK NIGHT will take place on Friday 10th January at 7.30pm in the Longniddry Inn. All are welcome to come along, with or without instruments.

LONGNIDDRY'S BRIDGE CLUBS

There are three bridge clubs in the village. The oldest of the three meets from September to April, on Mondays at 7pm in the church hall (room 2). All visitors welcome. For further information please contact the Secretary, Kate Borgman on 852425, or email kateborgman@aol.com.

CHURCH CONTACTS

Minister	Rev Robin Hill	853195
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