



Bellhill and Bothwell Parish
Church of Scotland

1 week to go....

CHRISTMAS At BBCofS

CHRISTMAS EVE

- Messy Christmas
12:00 West Halls
- Christingle Service
15:00 Bothwell
- Carols and refreshments
23:00 Bothwell
- Watchnight by candlelight
23:30 Bothwell

CHRISTMAS DAY

- 📅 Family Service
11:00am Bothwell



She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

Dear Friends,

I can't help but hear the words of *The Final Countdown* playing in my head, because today marks just one week until Christmas Day. As I write this, I'm very aware that this time next week I'll be preparing to lead our final service of Christmas, and I do hope and pray that you will come and join us.

There is always a small sadness that comes after a packed church on Christmas Eve when we gather again on Christmas Day and see empty pews. So let me gently invite you to try Christmas Day worship this year. I promise—it won't take long, but it will be meaningful.

Yesterday the church was bursting at the seams as we welcomed Bothwell Primary School back into the building. There wasn't a free seat in the church, and many adults had to stand at the back despite extra chairs being put out. It was a real joy to welcome them for the second year in a row and to share the Christmas message with the children—this year through the simple joy of a Chocolate Orange.

Did you know that the church has a perfect Chocolate Orange opener? It's often called a pulpit! There was great delight when one child was allowed to drop the orange from the pulpit and to watch as we opened it and saw it separated into individual segments.

The Chocolate Orange helps us remember the Christmas story in a simple but powerful way. Its sparkly wrapper reminds us of kings, and that Jesus is the King of Kings. Its round shape reminds us of the world, and that Jesus came for us all. Dropping it reminds us of the pain he came into and ultimately endured on the cross. And the segments left behind remind us that he came for each of us, and calls us to share his love with one another.

These precious moments, when we are able to share the Gospel, are priceless. As a church, we must continue to find ways to open our hearts and our doors wider to the world around us. Our church cannot survive without change. We heard the stark figures from Roy on Giving Sunday: £49 every hour, 24 hours a day. It isn't very comforting. The easy response would be to retreat, to cut back and focus only on Sundays, but I do not believe that is what we are called to do, nor is it sustainable.

Christmas reminds us to go out. The wise men left everything and travelled hundreds of miles to find Jesus. The shepherds, we are told:

“When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed.”

Luke 2:17–18

The Christmas story calls us to go out, to dare, and to try. Yes, it may cost us money, and that is scary, but it may also change hearts. Perhaps we will grow. Perhaps, like those who came before us, we will find ourselves needing to expand rather than shrink.

Tearfund recently published a report stating:

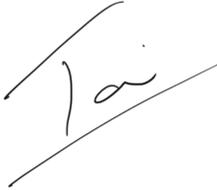
“Churchgoing rises as nearly one in two Brits (45%) plan to attend a church event or service this Christmas.”

[Read more here](#)

What an extraordinary opportunity lies before us. And what wonders may await us as we leave the stable this Christmas and journey together into 2026.

With every blessing

Revd. Iain

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Iain', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Nativity Service this week so no order of service. **REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR CHRISTMAS JUMPER THIS SUNDAY**

Sermon recap



Here is a brief recap from last weeks Sunday Sermon.

To watch the service (again) click [here](#).

Last Sunday we lit the third Advent candle.

Last Sunday we were reminded that baptism is God's grace given before we can earn or even understand it. We heard parents and godparents promise to bring her up in the life and worship of the church, and we were reminded that it truly takes a whole village to raise a child.

In our Advent reading from Zephaniah we learned that joy is not dependent on perfect circumstances but on the simple, life-changing truth: the Lord, your God, is in our midst a God who rejoices over us and even sings over us.

Head over to <https://pastors.ai/church/@bbcofs> to catch up on last weeks sermon and the previous weeks.

Christmas Services

CHRISTMAS

At BBCofS

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Christmas is a season of invitation, and I encourage each of you to invite someone to join you at a Christmas service. Join them as they hear the wonder of the Christmas story, sing familiar carols that feel like a warm embrace, and share in the joy, and even the beautiful chaos, of Christmas.

Jesus Christ was born for each of us, so let's open our hearts. Knock on that door, send that WhatsApp, or ping that email, and invite the person who is on your heart today.

Thank you



A great big thank you to everyone who donated Fun size sweets to allow us to make up 750 Christmas Bags to deliver to the nursery children of Bellshill and Bothwell. Thank you to everyone who helped make up the Christmas Bags and deliver them to the nurseries. The children and Staff of the ten nurseries were more than delighted to receive their bags from Santa as we spread Joy and Excitement of Christmas throughout our Community. THANK YOU

During Advent the Pastoral Team have been visiting our housebound members throughout Bellshill and Bothwell. They have deliver the Best Wishes of our Church through the giving a Christmas Card and a small Present to 70 people who are very grateful to see and heard what is happening within the Church. This was very much appreciated and the delight on their faces as they spoke about their faith and their upbringing within their faith family is always a Joy. Thank you to the Pastoral Team who give up their time to visit people. THANK YOU.

Bothwell Philharmonic Christmas Concert



The Bothwell Philharmonic Choir proudly presents '*Christmas Joy*' - an unforgettable evening filled with festive music! Join them, along with special guests, for a magical Christmas concert. A perfect Christmas evening out for families & friends - tickets available at the door; from

choir members.

 **Bothwell Church**

 **Friday 19th December 2025**

Tickets: £12 (AT THE DOOR; FROM CHOIR MEMBERS; OR VIA EMAIL AT: CONTACT@BOTHWELLPHIL.CO.UK) Refreshments available

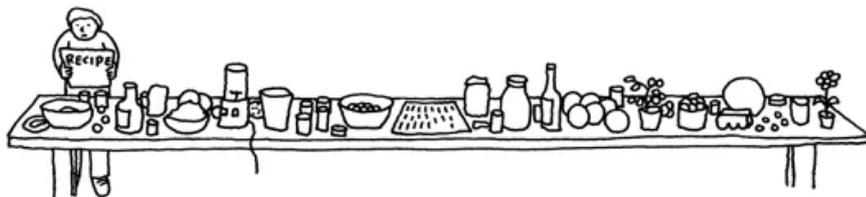
A final giggle!?!....

ADVENT

WE LOOK FORWARD



WE PREPARE



WE WAIT



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Bellshill and Bothwell Parish Church



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