

CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church

Spring 2018

Vol 21:1

*As each has received a gift,
employ it for one another,
as good stewards of God's
varied grace: 1 PETER 10-11*



St Michael's

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SUNDAY SERVICES



Communion

Sunday 29th April

All-Age Communion at 9:30am.
Traditional Communion at 11am
in the church
3pm in the Kirk Hall
with common and individual cups

Weekly Services

9.30am First Morning Service
Crèche in Cross House

9.45am All-Age Worship
Term time in Springfield School

11.00am Second Service

6.30pm Evening Service
in Kirk Hall

Monthly Communion

Sunday 27th May
at 12:15pm
Individual Cup

Cover photograph:
775th Anniversary Banner

The deadline for the Summer 2018 issue is 28th April 2018.

St. Michael's Parish Church of Scotland is a Scottish Charity Reg. No. SC016185

VIEW FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends,

The snow is falling and I am thinking of my father, days after returning from his funeral. I wish to tell you of my trip to be with him, in part because it helps to tell the story, in part because so many of our families make the same journey in times of bereavement.

But now a memory breaks in. A snow scene. We are on a back road in Cape Breton that runs through a stretch of forest known for its evergreens. Dad, my brother Gordon and I, Uncle Bud and our cousin Paul. It was coming on Christmas and we were looking for trees, axes sharpened. (What you could do in those days.) I guess I was twelve. We came to a hill with a steep drop and the car got away from Dad. Down we went, fishtailing, holding our breath, scared stiff us boys. Dad steering hard to the left, hard to the right, more than once, before he got it under control. And we exhaled, going up the other side of the hill only seconds later as if nothing had happened. Hearts beating again. But how Uncle Bud had laughed and whooped, saying: 'Jeez Jackie I thought we were goners. Good boy yourself!' Slapping him on the back. Dad saying: 'I had it all the time.' We got out, shook ourselves off, found our trees and headed home. Dad trimmed the lower branches, put ours in its base and set it up in the front room. Mom found an angle she liked and we started to decorate it. Mom in charge, Anne and Tom joining in, just wee ones at the time. There was an angel that went on top, the last thing to be added each year. But by then we were thinking of the presents soon to appear under it.

My father passed away on Thursday, 15 February. Peacefully, at about 8.30 in the morning, with us by his side. Mom bending over him. I had been able to spend three precious days with him, once my sister Anne let us know the fall he had taken was more serious than first thought. A CAT scan at the QEII Hospital in Halifax showed bleeding in the central part of his brain. An operation not possible, there was little they could do for him. A bed was found in Musquodoboit Harbour – in Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital – an hour out of the city along the coast. Dad had never spent a day in his life in Musquodoboit Harbour, nor had we. But it turned out to be twelve minutes from where my Uncle Kenneth and Aunt Betty live, whose support made things much easier for us and for which we thanked God.



***Stewart's parents, Ruth Anne and David, on their wedding day
24 August, 1957***

Dad's power of speech had been affected and communication was difficult. Mom said: 'Let's sing, he loves singing.' She started with, 'I Walk in the Garden Alone.' From there it was 'Amazing Grace,' 'Jesus Loves Me' and 'There is a Balm in Gilead,' which Dad used to sing as a solo. He sang along, without words, his voice rising and falling with ours. It sounded like whale song, his voice, what there was left of it. Eerie, beautiful. At first he kept going after we had stopped, leading us to start in again.

We held his service in Cape Breton – in St Andrew's, Sydney Mines – where he was born and we were raised. We stayed at my Aunt Emily's farmhouse outside town. On the way down from Halifax Mom had been telling stories from her and Dad's early years. How, for example, they would all go dancing at the Odd Fellows Hall on a Saturday night. A five piece orchestra. 'Your father used to sing in my ear,' she said. At the farm we regaled ourselves with stories from our own experience. Like how Dad, having offered to make his justly famous seafood chowder for our rehearsal party the night before Sarah and I were married, brought the water for it from Cape Breton! Overland to Cobourg, a distance of over 1100 miles. Ontario water not good enough for him. Stories we shared with Sarah, Imogen and Alexander via FaceTime, passing the phone around the room.

We were worried for Mom, wondering how she would manage. But she was a revelation at the wake, sustaining her energy for hours, buoyed by the love of friends and family. It was the same at the teas following the Service of Thanksgiving the next day. How it all came back, our childhood. Our story together. Dad's sister, Auntie Violet, made us feel the world was a better place just by being there. The local minister, Corrie Stewart, came alongside us very naturally, hearing our stories, attending to details, leading in prayer.

Not all memories were easy. The death of Malcolm, our youngest brother, at the age of twenty-six, is always with us. Often Dad would visit his grave in Brookside Cemetery, having conversations with himself, asking God why, and seeking peace. In the Spring, when burials are again possible, Dad will be laid to rest beside him. It was good to talk to Malcolm's son, Kamren, now eighteen, and his Mom, who were present throughout.

Among my father's many sayings was one he would tell us when things were dark: 'It will be brighter in the morning.' We knew that's what he was going to say but it helped anyway. Simple. Never wrong. From a loving heart. I say it to Imo and Alex.

May God rest him. And all of our loved ones who go on before us.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

HEADING FOR HONDURAS

by Rhona MacRae



Rhona on a visit to Kirsty in the Dominican Republic

with others my age learning about the different projects available, helping out in the Coll community centre and staying with a local host family. By the end of the week, after listening to presentations and speaking with country representatives, I set my sights on one of the teaching projects in Honduras – luckily the Project Trust agreed to place me there.

Honduras is the second poorest country in Central America with over 60% of the population living in poverty. The best route out of poverty is education and educational institutions work to keep children in school to improve their life prospects. Project Trust partners projects in rural areas where children are even more disadvantaged, many leaving school to help support their families. Although I have little detail, I know I will be teaching in a school. As well as providing general education, I hope to introduce extra-curricular activities to the children, based around my interests at home such as music and art.

Living and working in Honduras will certainly be a challenge, especially since the language spoken there is Spanish – something I am currently trying to get to grips with – but I can't wait to experience this new culture in an immersive way.

In order to volunteer with Project Trust I needed to raise £6200. Happily I am nearly there – I am grateful that many of you have already generously supported me. If anyone would still like to help get me across the finish line then I'd gladly accept any donation!

My virgingiving is: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/RhonaMacRae>

Or you can hand them to me in person.

Any questions feel free to email me: rhonamacrae@outlook.com

2017 Financial Results

by the Stewardship and Finance Team

Our congregation's 2017 Draft Financial Results show a relatively positive outcome with Net Income (Income less Expenses) increased from £39,385 in 2016 to £113,876 in 2017. However, there are a number of factors which, when taken into account, mean the outlook is not quite so rosy. Additionally it's important to bear in mind that we have a responsibility to retain enough reserves to meet exceptional costs such as those we anticipate in Cross House and, in line with our agreed policy, to retain a minimum of 6 months Expenditure in case of an unexpected or exceptional event.

Key points to consider along with the figures:

- * We had the benefit of a number of one-off items such as the 'Brides of St Michael's' Exhibition and significant rental income generated by the filming which took place in the church during August/September. This helped to fill a gap arising from reduced rental income from the Kirkgate flat which had been fully let in 2016. (see Income from Charitable Activities)
- * A further positive was the increase in offerings for which we are extremely thankful. Your generosity is very much appreciated, however this was more than offset by a reduction in legacies and donations for specific purposes (eg Youth activities) which cancelled out that benefit. (see Donations and legacies)
- * Property expense was lower than expected but we anticipate a number of significant costs arising in 2018 and beyond as we tackle necessary organ maintenance, important improvements to Cross House (which seem likely to exceed the recent costs for rewiring and replacing the church lighting), overdue replacement of the ageing church boiler and repairs in the Manse which couldn't be completed in 2017. (see Expenditure on Charitable Activities)
- * We spent less on Youth Work this year as a result of the vacancy following Russell's departure
- * The average age of our congregation continues to increase and we still rely on a small number of extremely generous donors for a large percentage of our regular income.

So, whilst we must be grateful for what we have, in 2018 we also need to continue our efforts to find innovative ways to cover both ongoing and one-off expenses to ensure our work in the Parish and the wider church is maintained.



	Unrestricted Funds* 2017 £	Restricted Funds** 2017 £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Income and endowments from				
Donations and Legacies	335,753	46,316	382,069	389,212
Charitable Activities	51,916	12,798	64,714	53,240
Investments	3,304	0	3,304	2,277
Total Income	390,973	59,114	450,087	444,729
Expenditure on				
Raising Funds	0	0	0	0
Charitable Activities	326,336	9,511	335,847	405,279
Total Expenditure	326,336	9,511	335,847	405,279
Net incoming/(expenditure) before gains and losses on investments	64,637	49,603	114,240	39,450
Net gains/(losses) on investments	(364)	0	(364)	(65)
Net income/(expenditure)	64,273	49,603	113,876	39,385

*Unrestricted Funds are those which have been generated/donated for general use.

**Restricted Funds relate to donations of funds generated for a specific purpose and can only be used for that purpose, e.g. Property works; Sunday Club, etc.

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A DUET UNFINISHED

by Pat Brough



Andrew Sutherland, our organist and choirmaster, has left us after nearly 28 years.

Andrew started playing organ in 1974 at Haggs Parish Church. After he married Anne there in 1980, they moved to Linlithgow. Lorna Paterson quickly spotted Andrew using a music hymnbook and persuaded him to join the choir. Meanwhile, Anne (a Sunday School teacher since 1973) had roped him into accompanying praise in Sunday School, as it was then known.

Graduating in maths and music from Glasgow University, and encouraged by his organist father, Hugh, Andrew soon became assistant organist to Tom Inness, with Tom conducting and Andrew on organ. The choir sang works by Handel, Haydn and Mozart and recorded TV and radio services for BBC and ITV; they also recorded a cassette. When Tom retired in 1989, Andrew became organist and choirmaster.

Andrew used his love of history to research music used in 1242 for the consecration of St Michael's, conducting the choir (walking backwards!) as we traipsed thrice round the church as had been done 750 years before. Andrew researched the history of music in the kirk, for a talk to the Friends of St Michael's. The choir sang for church AGMs, the Guild, St Michael's Hospital, farewell socials, fund-raising events, inter-church dinners, as well as singing at weddings, funerals, etc. Andrew added Vivaldi and Fauré to the repertoire. When Andrew gave recitals at Kelvingrove Art Gallery, the choir went along and sang Christmas carols. Andrew has purchased anthem books for the choir, organised music for events for Linlithgow Players and given Sunday afternoon recitals in the church. He worked with Cheryl and Anne at Seedlings and wrote a special Seedlings song. He started the Family Band with Amy Donaldson and recorded a CD of French organ music.

Andrew inspired loyalty in his choir and willingly helped any member practise at events outside the church, accompanying them if necessary. He composed nearly 30 anthems, provided four-part harmonies for unison hymns, descants, music for the Aaronic blessing and the St Michael's Amens. He arranged secular music like 'Thank you for the music' used at the Big Sing for Alzheimer Scotland; he has written several articles for Crosswind.

We will miss the Bach, the Widor, the joyous Lefébure-Wély and the social evenings chez Sutherland – thank you, Anne. Everyone will miss Andrew's talents, especially those privileged to work closely with him.

ESTD  1919

Veitch

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ANNE + CHILDREN = 😊😊😊

by Anne Bennie



Anne Sutherland moved to Linlithgow in 1980 and started helping out at Sunday School as it was called then. While her three children were young she stepped down from Sunday School for a short time but returned to help and led the Nursery Sunday school. Anne has a genuine love for children and a desire to teach them about God. During her years as a primary teacher she also taught Religious Education in school.

Anne has great natural ability when working with children, but that did not mean that being a Junior Church leader was an easy job. Anne believed that children deserved the very best. She was always extremely well prepared, in an interesting and imaginative way, for the children in her groups. In 2015 she decided that a custom-made programme would be the best way to meet the needs of the children who came to St Michael's and so initiated Sunday Club.

Anne wrote a very detailed programme and many of you will have seen information on the screen showing the activities the children had done the previous week. This was followed by details of what they would be learning that day at Sunday Club. The children loved Anne because she was genuinely interested in them and listened to what they had to say. Parents appreciated Anne because she supported them in teaching their children about God. I know that all the Sunday Club leaders valued the huge effort she made to running Sunday Club.

When Rev Cheryl MacKellar-Young started Seedlings, Anne was there to support, and took responsibility for the activities for the children and deputised when Cheryl was unable to attend. In addition, she was the team leader for Education for several years supporting the delivery of the 2020 vision of a 'WELL' church.

Anne is a person of faith and her Christian values are evident in the way she lives her life. She cares deeply for her family, friends and those she comes in contact with. For many years she has been a collector for Christian Aid, again showing her care for those in need.

Anne has stepped down from her Eldership duties and many people, young and older, will miss her pleasant, enthusiastic and affectionate manner as well as the contribution she made to St Michael's.

FERGUSON FAMILY UPDATE

by Lorna Ferguson

Spring is a significant time in Japan – one of new beginnings. Company and school years start in April. There is a Japanese word literally translated as ‘April illness’ which is used to mean the euphoria experienced by college students or workplace recruits at the beginning of school or work. This is followed by ‘May illness’ which is the blues experienced by those very same students and recruits!

Spring is a time when many Japanese move house, usually moved by their companies on short notice, sometimes to a completely different part of Japan. In spring 2013 our family left the northern island of Hokkaido after living there for nearly 15 years, and in spring 2016, we moved to Chiba city where we now live.

Spring is also the cherry blossom season. From the middle of February forecasts are published showing when the trees are expected to start to bloom in each area. Japanese people hold picnics under the blossoms for the 10 days or so that they last. However, along with the celebration there is also a tinge of sadness at the brevity of the flowers, which reminds them how short life is.

We learnt that in a new way over the last two springs. It was in spring 2016 that David started to feel unusually tired and was then diagnosed with a rare form of blood cancer.

Up until then we had lived in a small apartment next to the OMF office in Ichikawa. But we were offered the rent of a house nearer the boys’ football club and felt it was the right thing to move, even though it meant a commute to the office. The house is old (by Japanese standards) but spacious, with its own garden and even three toilets, which is almost unheard of here!

As we moved we wondered if God had some special plan. Perhaps there would be something new for us to get involved in, or people to meet? Instead this house turned out to be the perfect place for us as David battled cancer. Not only is it quiet with an extra room when David needed it, but it was also only 30 minutes away from a University hospital with a large haematology department able to treat David’s unusual illness.

In Deuteronomy 31:8 Moses said to Joshua, ‘The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.’ We certainly felt that God had gone before us in providing this house which was just what we needed at that time.

And it was in spring 2017 that David was called home to heaven. Matthew and I had been able to take him outside briefly on Easter Sunday to look at the cherry blossoms outside the hospital. There the Japanese feeling that the blossoms represent the brevity of life took on a new meaning.

Now we are at spring again, one year later. Daniel (23) and Matthew (21) are busy with their studies at Universities in the UK, both looking for jobs/traineeships. These are not as easy to find compared with when David and I were studying, many years ago! Calum (17) and Alistair (14) are about to enter the last year of high and middle school respectively and are still very involved in their football team, JEF United. Calum would like to become a professional footballer. Some people get a contract straight out of high school, but others attend University first where there is a strong football league. Alistair will hear in the summer if he has been accepted into the JEF youth team and will then decide which high school to apply for. To get into high school in Japan you need to sit entrance exams so it can be quite a pressured year.

I still work with OMF International in Japan, serving on the leadership team, which helps oversee the 125 missionaries we have here. I am also involved in our local church and gradually getting to know different people there. David was the big football fan, but I am trying to take up the mantle and usually watch the boys' matches on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. It is also a great way to get to know the other parents as we cheer from the sidelines. Many of them came to David's funeral where they were able to hear, possibly for the first time, the good news of Jesus. I pray for more opportunities to share with them the hope that we have.

Thank you for all your support. Please keep praying for the people of Japan.

Lorna, Daniel, Matthew, Calum and Alistair



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ST MICHAEL'S NEW BANNER

by Margaret Henderson



Every year congregations should focus on one aspect of Stewardship and in 2017 the focus for us here in St Michael's was Stewardship of Talents. Unlike Stewardship of Treasure, it is not easy to measure Talents and the Stewardship and Finance Team spent considerable time discussing the best way to approach this. We met with Margot Robertson from Church of Scotland Head Office in Edinburgh and talked through several ideas. One which we felt was worth taking further was 'commissioning' a piece of artwork which showcased the skill and talent of the congregation. And of course,

this seemed even more appropriate as the year 2017 marked the 775th anniversary of the consecration of St Michael's. But where do you start looking for the inspiration for such a venture?

In June 2017 The Rt Rev Dr Derek Browning, Moderator of the Church of Scotland visited St Michael's to preach on Pentecost Sunday, the anniversary of the church's consecration. During that service Brian Lightbody, one of our elders, gave a short presentation on 'Faith and Fabric' which recounted some of the history of how the church building itself came into being and how this was influenced over the centuries by the faith of those involved.

There was an exhibition at the back of the church of artwork designed by some members of the congregation. This was organised by Trish Lightbody and she has the following to say about the ideas behind this.

'When I was asked to put together a small art exhibition under the heading "Faith and Fabric", to commemorate the 775th Anniversary of the consecration of St Michael's, I approached several artists in the congregation. They all rose to the challenge by producing a stimulating and diverse body of work inspired by the church building.'

One of these was Katie Marshall, who is studying at The Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee. She produced a most powerful and original piece inspired by St Michael's 'Crown of Thorns'. Katie had this to say about her artwork.

'The Crown of Thorns spire is a symbolic and striking feature; not only for St Michael's Church, but the town of Linlithgow itself. Installed in 1964, the stunning contemporary design complements the elegance of the original church building. I thoroughly enjoy creating collages, so for this design I built up layers using cardboard, card, acrylic paint and ink. I carefully selected these materials as I thought the contrast between the smooth cardboard spire worked well against the loose strokes of paint in the sky. The composition shows that even against a vibrant sky, it is the spire that steals the show.'



When the members of the Stewardship and Finance Team saw Katie's artwork, we were immediately struck by its vibrancy and originality so, with her permission, we approached Valerie Spence to ask if she thought it was possible to convert this into a hanging or a banner. Thankfully Valerie agreed and she approached Isobel Johnston, Shona Robertson and Doreen Eaglesham who agreed to help with this project and translate it into a banner.



The ladies said that it was quite a task as it is very difficult to interpret someone's artwork and not lose the original inspiration. However, I am sure that you will agree that the banner is beautiful and we are indebted to Valerie, Isobel, Shona, Doreen and last, but not least, Katie for producing such a beautiful hanging which will only add to our wonderful sanctuary.

I should add that 2018 has been designated YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND and here in St Michael's we have anticipated this as we celebrate the talent of one of our young people, Katie!

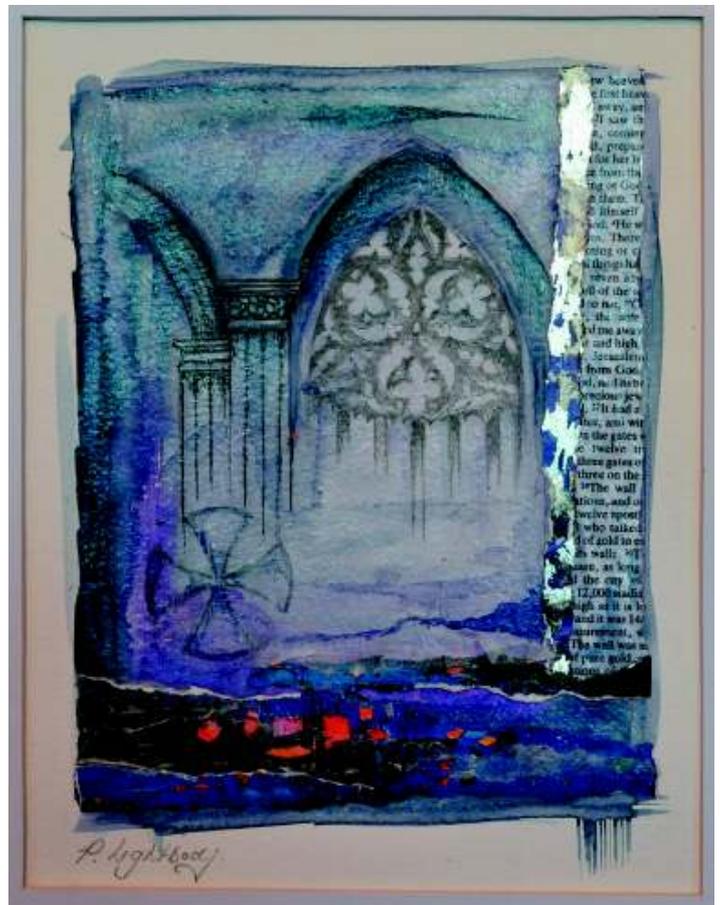
So, a special thank you to Katie.

FAITH AND FABRIC



CHURCH INTERIOR - Jane Stewart

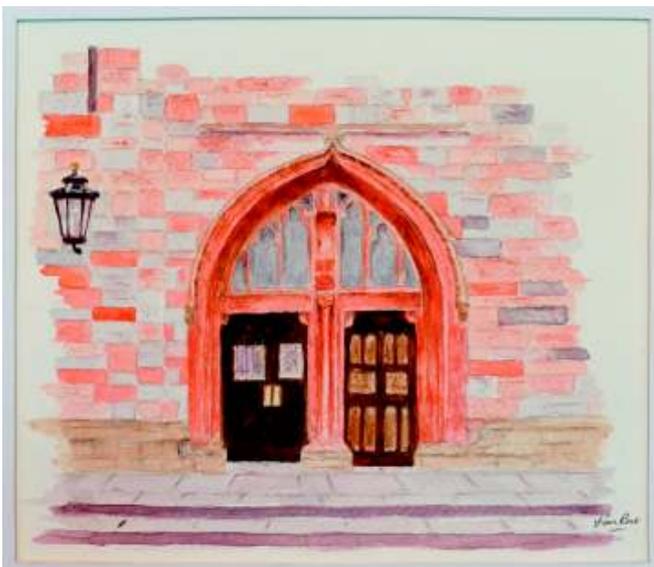
When St Michael's is open on winter mornings I love to sit and draw in the soft morning light. I try to capture different fragments of the whole, in the peace and beauty of the church.



ST KATHERINE'S AISLE - Trish Lightbody

The window in St Katherine's Aisle is a masterpiece of colour which radiates light on to the adjacent columns and floor. However, I wanted to focus on the magnificent intricate stonework of the window created by the original medieval master mason.

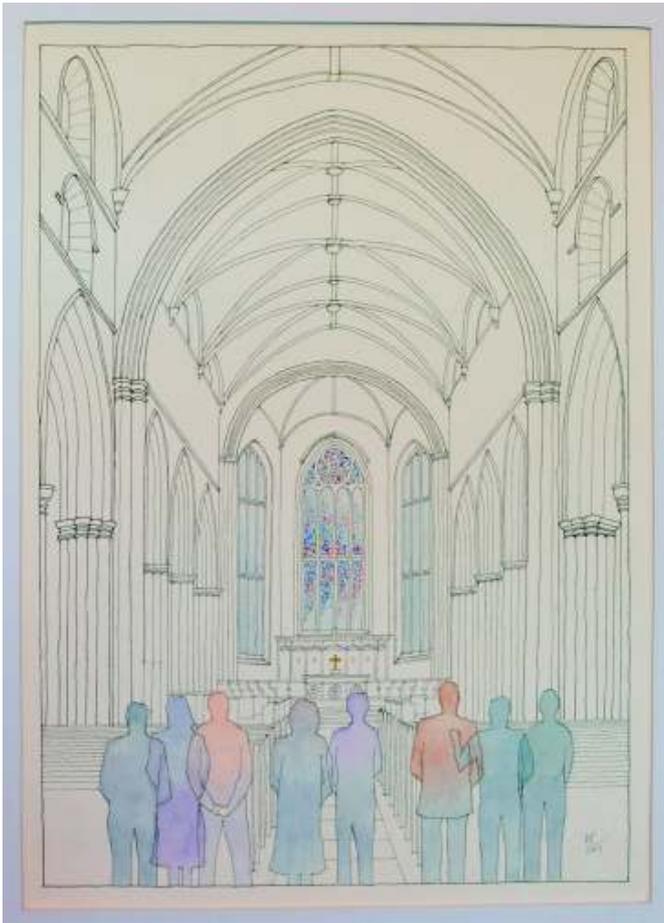
FROM THE CROSS - Chris Long



THE WEST DOOR ENTRANCE – Jim Rae



I recall the first time that I entered St. Michael's through the strong, robust west door entrance and being completely overwhelmed by the beautiful architecture and peaceful feeling that filled the Church. Down through the generations, people have walked through this entrance for very many reasons. They have come in times of sorrow, joy, for worship, prayer and for peace and contemplation.



CLOUD of WITNESSES - Brian Lightbody

The bible says in Hebrews Ch 13 that we are surrounded by a great 'Cloud of Witnesses' – those men and women of faith who have gone before us. In a church like St Michael's one is very aware of all those who have worshipped here over the centuries and whose legacy we inherit.



CROWN OF THORNS – Katie Marshall

See pages 14 and 15

Some of the children, Eva Tunnicliffe, Jo Tunnicliffe, Sarah Curle and Tom Cargill, created their version of the creation window using coloured dyes painted on to silk.

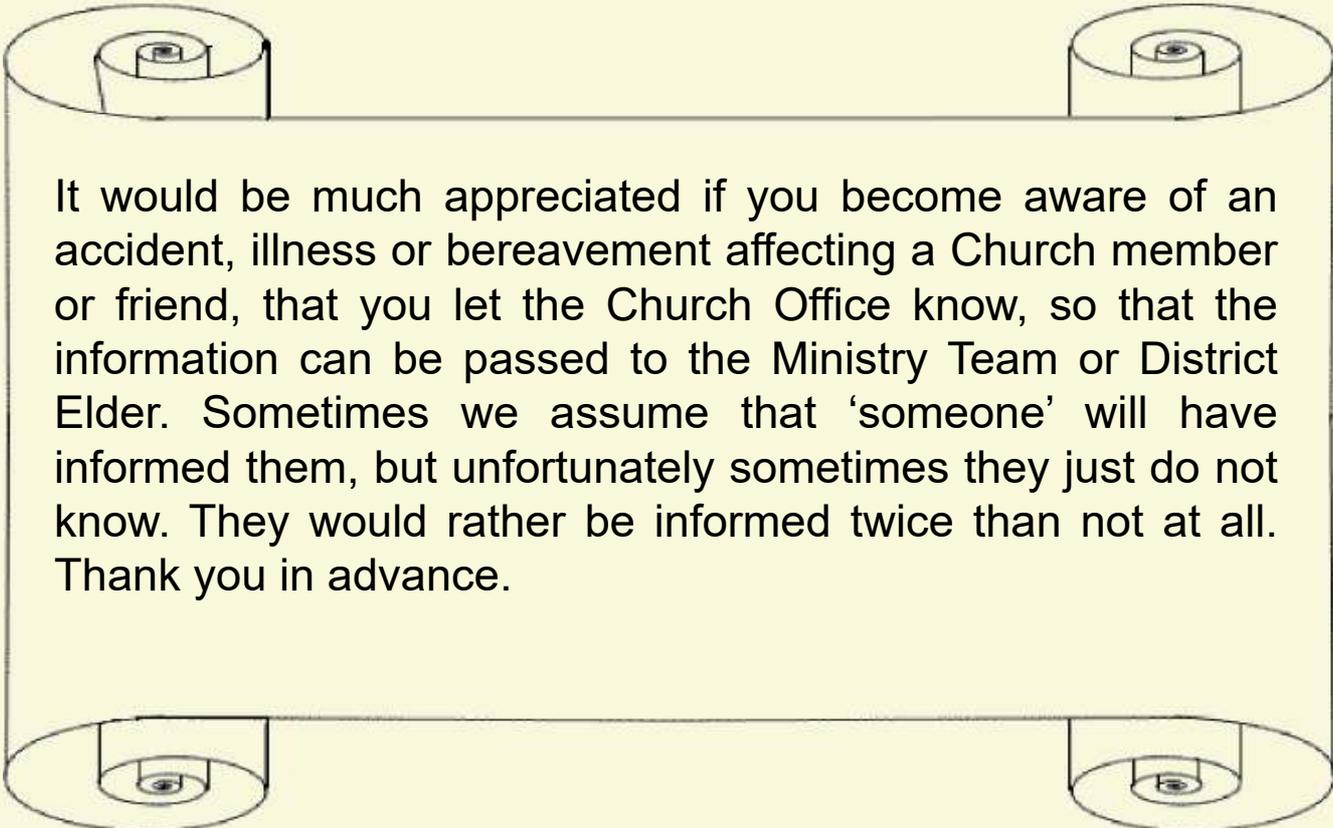
CREATION WINDOW



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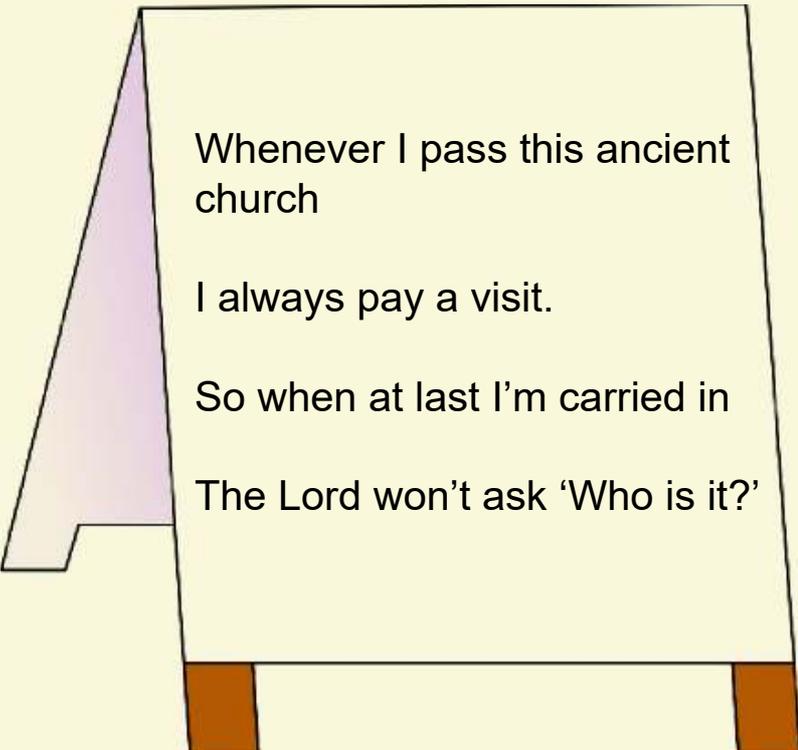
– a request from the Pastoral Care Team



It would be much appreciated if you become aware of an accident, illness or bereavement affecting a Church member or friend, that you let the Church Office know, so that the information can be passed to the Ministry Team or District Elder. Sometimes we assume that 'someone' will have informed them, but unfortunately sometimes they just do not know. They would rather be informed twice than not at all. Thank you in advance.

SMILE, SMILE, SMILE

Brian and Trish Lightbody shared with us this sign seen outside a church in Barbados:

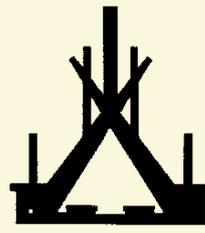


Whenever I pass this ancient church

I always pay a visit.

So when at last I'm carried in

The Lord won't ask 'Who is it?'



PARISH

WEDDINGS

They are no longer two, but one

January

Agnes Martin to Iain Harrison



BAPTISMS

Let the children come to me

December

Charlotte Anne Jones, Lovells Glen

Cameron Keith Robert Anderson, Kettil'stoun Crescent

January

Matthew Craig Farquharson, Dunfermline

February

Ruaridh Darrell, Laurieston



March

Emma Marion Bridge, Mill Lade

Sophia Alexandra Oliver, Springfield Road

Lara Isabella Oliver, Springfield Road

Eva Georgia Oliver, Springfield Road

Mason James Chisholm, Kettil'stoun Grove

REGISTER



FUNERALS

I am the resurrection and the life

December

Elizabeth 'Betty' McAlpine, Philip Avenue



January

David Weir, Linlithgow Care Home (formerly Torphichen)
Barbara Macgregor, Bo'ness (formerly Highfield Crescent)
Eileen Talman, Polmont
David Wallace, The Vennel

February

Anne Cummings, Linlithgow Care Home (formerly St Ninian's Road)
May Manson, Linlithgow Care Home (formerly Auldhill Drive)
Margaret Martin, Justinhaugh Drive

NEW MEMBERS

For we are all members of one body



Paul Williams, Bathgate
Jill Williams, Bathgate
Lois Taylor, Winchburgh

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS

All Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon in the Kirk Hall unless otherwise indicated.

14th April	Guild Afternoon Tea (3pm-4.30pm)
28th April	LAMP
12th May	Linlithgow Reed Band



EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

22nd April	3.00pm, Scouts Annual St George's Day Parade
26th May	7.30pm, The Big Noise, Sistema Choir Concert
10th June	7.00pm, NYCoS Summer Concert
23rd June	Gala Day (wet weather venue)

NEED A ROOM FOR YOUR EVENT?

Looking for a venue for a children's party?

Need a room for a meeting?

Have you thought of using the Kirk Hall or Adam Room or one of the smaller meeting rooms in Cross House? The rental rates are very reasonable.

Please contact the Church Office to discuss availability – phone 01506 842188 or email info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk.

WEBSITES

www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk – Go to our new website to see Crosswind in full colour! Also find podcasts of sermons, current intimations, details of upcoming events and all other church activities.

www.helpcentre.org.uk – offers information covering many concerns. Wondering where to access support for yourself or another? Look at the website or phone 842646.

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES IN YOUR OLD KITBAG AND SMILE, SMILE, SMILE.

by Norma Costley



The words above are from the first song we sing each month at our Sing-along for Memory. It is a good reminder of why we come together on the second Thursday of every month at 12 noon in the Kirk Hall. Those living with memory loss and their carers within our church family, in our community and beyond gather for fellowship and music. It is a time to forget about any worries we might have and spend the time enjoying ourselves and smiling!

Our numbers have grown rapidly over the last 18 months. We now have around 80 people attending.

We have a large number of regulars from the town who come independently with carers. Linlithgow Day Care attends with their Thursday group and Linlithgow Care Home brings a group of residents. In addition to our local visitors, we are delighted to welcome residents from The Haining, Broxburn and Middleton Hall Care Homes where some Linlithgow residents are being cared for.

This has meant additional work for the ladies from the Fellowship Team who prepare a light lunch for the ten tables we now require for our guests. Baking from members of the congregation who kindly give of their time provides the sweet items. We are grateful to Greggs for supplementing this with their end-of-day donation. We have a large number of volunteers who set up the tables, welcome guests at the door and serve the food, tea and coffee.

The hall is a sea of red and yellow – red tablecloths and yellow plates and napkins, finished off with beautiful flower arrangements made by yet more volunteers. Our own Girls' Brigade very kindly made the flower arrangements in January. As they leave, some very happy guests are given the flowers to take home. Lunch is a very social occasion and a great time to get to know one other.

We are grateful for a very generous donation from the Bo'ness Belles. We have used some of this money to buy dementia-friendly tableware as well as various musical instruments. Recently we purchased a screen and laptop which will enhance the experience for our guests and also be useful to other groups using the hall. In addition, we are investigating buying a radio mike so that we can use the loop system.

Our repertoire of songs has gradually increased and I now try to have a theme for each month. In October the theme was autumn colours. In November we enjoyed songs from the war years. We had a Scottish theme in January and love songs in February for Valentine's Day. The theme is often very creatively reflected in some of the lunch items and the flowers!

It is wonderful to watch our guests come alive with the music. Last month a lady danced her way through each song. We sing around eighteen songs and half way through the programme we always have our 'exercise time' as we follow the actions to the *Hokey Cokey* and *One finger, one thumb keep moving*. We like to use musical instruments wherever possible and we always have one song where everyone makes a noise with rattles and shakers. As for the singing, it is simply



amazing, supported as always by our Sunshine Singers. I supply a little bit of information about each song as we move from one song to the next, trying to trigger memories with names from the past. Marshall Green projects the words and Angus Robertson accompanies on the piano. Research has shown that responding to music is one thing dementia cannot destroy. This can be clearly seen in action at the Sunshine Sing-along. If you feel you would benefit from joining us or you know of anyone who might benefit, we would be delighted to welcome you.

It is very much a team effort and everyone involved sees the value in what we are doing. By offering this experience each month, St Michael's is showing that we as a church care about members of our community for whom



life is anything but easy. Both the numbers attending and the number of volunteers willing to give of their time show how worthwhile this venture is proving to be. For an hour or two each month fellowship over lunch and singing favourite songs brings life and often words to many who struggle. This was one of the many initiatives started by the Rev Cheryl McKellar-Young. We miss her presence and her sense of fun but we will be forever grateful in St Michael's for her vision.

NEWS FROM THE PROPERTY TEAM

by Jim Rae

The Property Team continues to be engaged in a full programme of repair, maintenance, refurbishment and renewal. The year began with a three-day Electrical Fixed Wire Testing in Cross House – a statutory requirement to be undertaken every five years. A programme of remedial works has been defined from the test results and is being implemented by our appointed electrical services contractor.

A Fire Consultant carried out a risk assessment in all properties during mid-January and a full report was received some weeks later. We drew up recommendations and an action plan, and arranged a meeting with Lothian Fire and Rescue to assess the consultant's report.

Annual church property inspections were completed for all buildings and a priority team action plan drawn up to attend to repairs and maintenance. This was issued for action during mid-February and is well underway. A specialised action plan requiring contractor input was also drawn up and is being actioned. We will carry out property inspections for 2018 during September this year in preparation for budget input. The Property Register submission for St Michael's to Presbytery is nearing the final stages of completion and will be ready for the required date. A Quinquennial Survey and Report is scheduled for our Church properties during 2018. This is a detailed fabric survey carried out by an appointed building surveyor.

The Church is the focus of several exciting projects which will protect the fabric and preserve the building. The lower north and south roof gutters have been cleared of leaves, vegetation and silt by our roofing contractor as well as the concrete drainage channel on the south side of the church, allowing rainwater to drain away effectively. A new rainwater and foul drainage system is being designed, thus eradicating blocked drains and poor rainwater evacuation which cause fabric deterioration. Quotations for the insertion of a roof membrane and alternative lead lining covering into the lower level stone church gutters have been received and are under consideration. Resolving the drainage and fabric dampness protection issues will protect our Church fabric and halt stonework deterioration.

A Church Lightning Protection Test and Report has been carried out by PTSG



(Premier Technical Services Group). We have entered into a five-year fixed price agreement with this company saving considerable expenditure.

Repairs to the stone floor surface have been carried out removing trip hazards. This was a low cost project covering a number of the worst affected areas of floor damage; further repairs will take place in due course, gradually eradicating the worst of the stone floor deterioration.

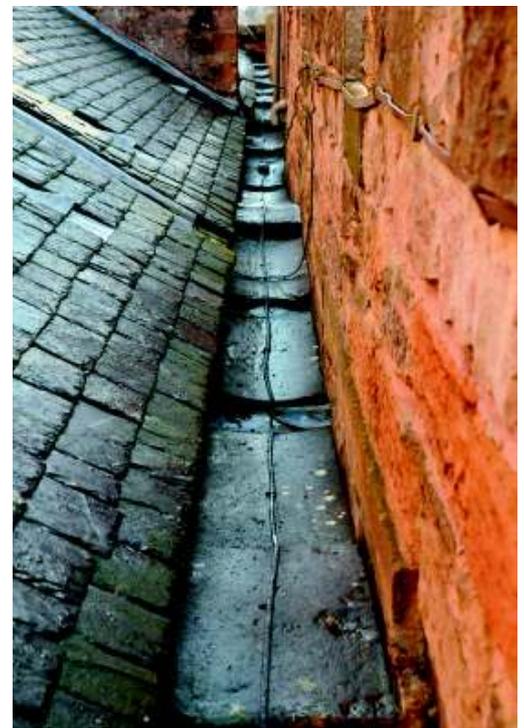
A clear and stained glass conservation specialist, Edinburgh Stained Glass House, has been approached to provide a cost for some minor clear glass repairs and the cleaning of all church clear glass windows. Phase 2 of this project will later consider the cleaning of all stained glass windows.

Two windows have been renewed in the Manse and several rooms decorated.

Pollock Hammond Architects are in the final stages of producing options for offices and meeting rooms as a possible alternative to Cross House. The option of considering a new building is being fully investigated and costed. As part of the options, a property valuation will be carried out by an approved building surveyor to determine the value of Cross House in its current condition. Meetings and discussions with our architects continue and will result in a presentation being made to Session. Heating in the Kirk Hall and adjoining areas has improved greatly after a new circulating pump and boiler control thermostat were replaced during January. The Kirk hall floor will be refurbished by GL Floors during the week commencing 2 April, when there are no hall bookings because of school holidays.

The Property Team is responsible for in-house Electrical Portable Appliance Testing, which must comply fully with the Health and Safety Toolkit issued by General Trustees. There is a requirement that a full report is kept of all testing carried out throughout all church properties. All electrical appliances having minor repairs/changes/fuse replacement, etc must be logged on a Repairs and Modification sheet held in the Church Office and a signature obtained. Recording must be done within 24 hours of completion to allow a retest. Any change to an appliance nullifies the original test. We require everyone to follow this procedure.

Magazine space allows us to mention only a few of the more important and interesting activities that we get up to. If you want any further information on any of the above, please give us a call. We will be delighted to answer any of your questions.



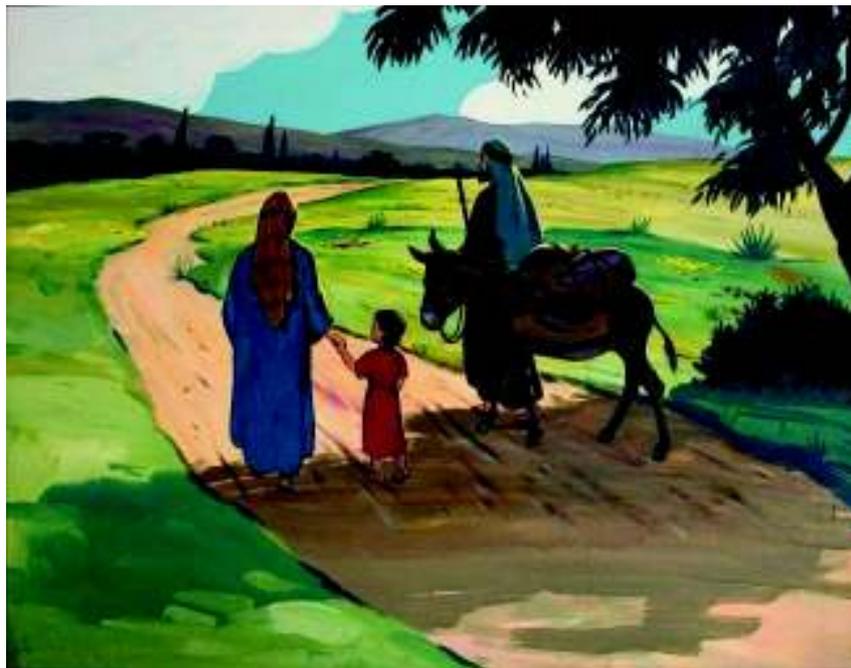
**Stonework Areas for
Rainwater Protection**

Flight to Egypt

by Anita France with Alison Parkinson

Alison and I were considering 'what next?' for a big musical/dramatic event at St Michael's after the success of previous productions. We've had some Old Testament with 'Joseph and the amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat', a Pantomime Nativity to celebrate Jesus' birth, and two years ago the musical *The Seed Must Die* which covered the last week, death and resurrection of Jesus. What else could be relevant and interesting to those inside and outside the church? Read on to find out what we've come up with.

The Bible tells us the poor will always be with us, but I would like you to consider particularly that we seem to be seeing refugees always with us. Is this a modern phenomenon? I would suggest not. Moses led a group of refugees from slavery to freedom and hundreds of years later a young family fled from Bethlehem to Egypt to save their small child from being murdered by a megalomaniac tyrant who had already killed his own wife and sons.



Did Mary want to take her young son to the foreign country of Egypt? How did they live with the knowledge that, if Jesus hadn't been born, the children of Bethlehem would have survived? There were many difficult questions which Mary and Joseph had to confront and live with – but they aren't alone in this. The modern refugee also has many agonising decisions to make. Will we go or stay here and hope matters improve and we survive? Do we all go? What about the elderly relatives? Do we go ourselves and abandon them?

Of course, the decision to leave the family home doesn't mean automatic safety. The journey then and now is dangerous. One small family with a toddler struggling through the desert can't be certain of reaching their destination. Thirst, wild animals, thieves, dishonest caravan leaders – all have to be risked and worried about. The modern ability to watch what is happening all over the world doesn't make the modern journey any safer. Nowadays it almost seems as though there is an industry built around refugees. People who make money by offering to transport the frightened and helpless to safety. Hopefully there are some honest operatives but from what you hear on the news, most aren't.

Jesus and His family for a few years were refugees. Like all refugees they longed to return home to safety and known surroundings where laws and customs were familiar. But like most refugees, they didn't know if they ever would be able to do so. First the political situation has to change, and then the family has to work so they can afford to return. What will happen when, and if, they do return? Will they be accepted by those who stayed?

Mary and Joseph fled from a local terror but Mary had left home as an unmarried mother. Would the respectable of Nazareth welcome her back or would she and her family be ostracised? Would it perhaps be better to stay in Egypt? No, never! They returned to the familiar, the family and friends they had known. If shunned at least they would be in a familiar place with a familiar religion.

Our previous productions brought different groups in the Church together and many new friendships were formed and new skills discovered. It is our hope that this production will do the same, but in one important aspect it will be very different. Previous events were huge productions, very stressful and time consuming. Alison and I plan to involve as many people, but with less stress and time commitment. 'How are you going to do that?' I hear you ask.

Join in the next production and find out for yourself. It will combine drama, music and poetry to show the problems and dilemmas faced by Joseph and Mary in their Flight to Egypt and by refugees in all times and in all places. It will take place early next year.



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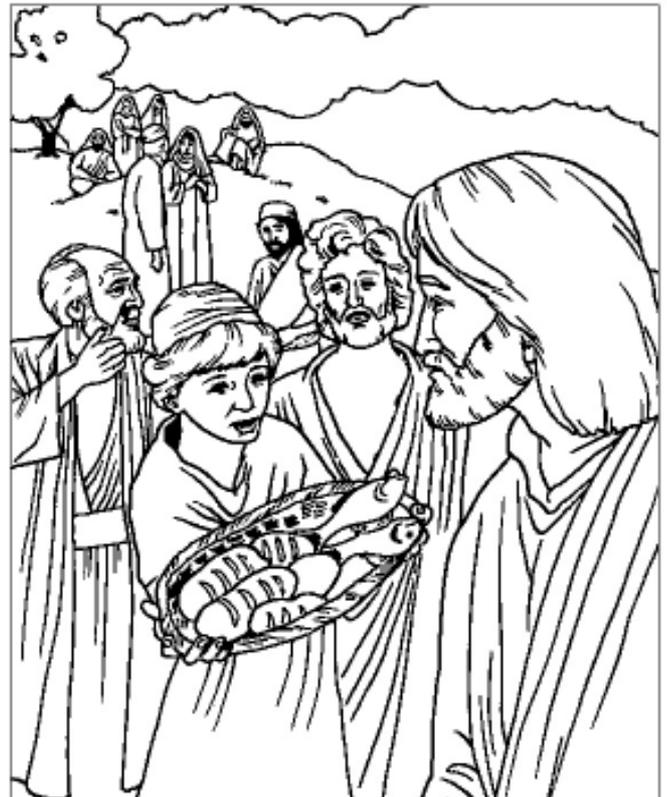
In John, chapter 6 we are told of how Jesus fed more than 5000 people. Find the words below in the wordsquare and then the letters left over spell out what Jesus said of himself.

P	H	I	L	I	P	N	E	M	B
I	S	A	O	M	T	T	V	H	O
E	I	B	A	B	A	R	L	E	Y
A	F	I	V	E	J	Y	E	R	E
N	A	D	E	E	O	T	W	O	L
D	N	A	S	U	O	H	T	F	L
R	O	U	L	G	R	A	S	S	A
E	S	N	I	A	T	N	U	O	M
W	I	F	B	A	S	K	E	T	S
S	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D	E

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Andrew | Barley |
| Baskets | Boy |
| Disciples | Eat |
| Fish | Five |
| Grass | Jesus |
| Loaves | Men |
| Mountain | Philip |
| Small | Son |
| Thanks | Thousand |
| Try | Twelve |
| Two | |



Can you find 10 differences between these two pictures?



JUST A MINUTE

Donald Burgess continues
to dip into the pages of the
Kirk Session minutes...

100 years ago

19th March 1918 A letter was received from Mr. Cassels, Organist, stating that two of his pupils desired to take lessons on the Organ and asking the Kirk Session to grant permission to use the Organ in the Church for that purpose – also, that his daughter, Miss May Cassels, may be permitted the use of the Organ for practice. The foregoing request was granted. As Miss Cassels rendered assistance in connection with Church Services, no charge in her case would be made.

* Mr Robinson was thanked for what he had done with regards to the shading of the lights, thereby making it possible to hold the joint service of 6th Jan. in the Church. (*War time restrictions coming into play.*)

* A letter was also received from the Chief Constable granting permission to ring the Church Bells during the evening but on no account after 9 o'clock.

50 years ago

20th Feb. 1968 The Session were pleased to learn that the Adult Education Committee of the Church of Scotland had agreed to contribute the sum of £150 towards the salary of the Assistant Minister (the Rev. G. McMillan) in respect of his acting as Warden of Cross House for the year from 1st May 1968, and £50 towards Adult Education activities to be conducted in that building.

* Mr. Ian Hay, Convener, submitted a further report of the Cross House Committee. The Session accepted the report, and resolved to record their appreciation of various persons who had gifted furniture, etc. for Cross House. It was noted that, subject to the Historic Buildings Council recommending an appropriate amount of grant to the Secretary of State, the Committee proposed to accept an offer of £11,002:17:8 by Messrs. John Malone & Son for the various works of repair, improvement and conversion.

* [*Recitals, etc. in Church*] The Moderator reported that, at evening service on Sunday 25th Feb. 1968, an organ recital would be given by Mr. George McPhee, Organist at Paisley Abbey, and that the Ionian Singers would take part in the service. He further reported that, on the evening of Sunday 31st March 1968, the Church Choir, with additional singers, would present Handel's Passion Music. The Session authorized payment from Congregational Funds of £10 for each service to defray expenses, and agreed that a Retiring Collection should be taken at each service.

25 years ago

Tues. 2nd Feb. 1993

[Mrs. Sheila Steel] The Moderator paid tribute to the life and work of Mrs. Steel, the wife of Dr. David Steel, our Minister Emeritus, who had died recently. He described her as a remarkable woman, highly intelligent and capable, and who had been fully involved in the work of her husband in his ministry in various charges and in his Moderatorial Year. Kirk Session stood in silence as a mark of respect and were led in prayer by the Moderator.

[Rev. Randal Gauld] The Moderator, on behalf of Kirk Session, expressed the good wishes of Kirk Session to Mr. Gauld on the occasion of his recent marriage and wished them every blessing in the future. It was noted that there would be an opportunity to mark the occasion in an appropriate manner on the return of Mrs. Gauld from New York in June.*

Tues. 16th Feb. 1993

[Springfield Services] Springfield Services would celebrate their tenth anniversary on Sunday 7th March with Communion. All elders were invited to attend, especially local elders or elders with districts in the area.

[Cross House Flat] Both rooms 8 and 9 are ready for a final coat of paint. Thereafter, the carpets will be laid to complete the flat for Mr. Gauld.

*Note: sadly Randal died in 2014 after a long battle with throat cancer. We give thanks for his life and ministry, both with us and in his Parish in Keith. His widow, Rev Dr Kay Gauld, is now Minister at Inch-Leslie-Premnay-Oyne in Aberdeenshire.



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MECHANICAL REPAIRS, DIAGNOSTICS AND SERVICE

BATHGATE STREET PASTORS

*by Malcolm McNeill
Coordinator of Bathgate Street Pastors*

It is 1am on a Sunday morning in a bitterly cold winter's night in Bathgate where anywhere between 300 to 500 people will queue to get into – then stumble out of – its two biggest nightclubs over the next few hours. Most are young, drunk and potentially vulnerable.

Lucy is new to the town. Upset and on her own, she wants to find a taxi home. Craig is dealing with his drunken friend who cannot stand up. Louise is in tears because her friends used fake ID to get into the club, leaving her outside. After a row, Wendy has become separated from her friends, lost her phone and has no money or means of getting home. The few policemen are all tied up with other things – but help of a holier kind is at hand.



We will walk Lucy to the taxi rank, support Louise and help her contact her friends or family and will pay for Wendy's taxi home. We will ensure Craig and his paralytic friend can get home safely.

Bathgate Street Pastors have been on patrol since 10pm the previous night and will finish around 4am, once everyone has cleared the streets and are safely on their way home. Throughout our shift we will have patrolled the streets of Bathgate town centre in 2 or 3 teams of 3, taking in all pubs and clubs, looking out for the vulnerable and needy; on our way we will have chatted with a great many, who are keen to know what we are about or simply want a blether.

Armed with space blankets, rain ponchos, first aid kits and flip flops – which not only save the soles of their bare, but earlier high-heeled, feet but also some of their boyfriend's backs, we are ready to deal with the fallout from the clubs and pubs at 'chucking out time'.

Our teams meet up and converge on the town centre precinct about 2:45am to deal with the tide making their way home; we are kept busy until the end of our shift dealing with whatever presents. We carry lollipops to help defuse potential flare ups between some of the throng, but a listening ear and calming presence often work best.

Throughout our evening's patrol we will have picked up and safely disposed of anywhere between 30 and 50 bottles and glasses which could be used as weapons or present hazards if fallen onto or walked upon. Police on foot or mobile patrol can often get tied up with incidents which often take them away from the town centre, leaving us on our own. Fortunately, incidents requiring the police are rare, but street pastors offer reassurance, safety and support through listening, caring and helping.

Bathgate Street Pastors was set up in 2012 by Ascension Trust (the governing body behind the Street Pastors initiative), with support from local churches and community groups, in partnership with police, local council and other statutory agencies.

All Street Pastors are Christians, part of a local church and concerned for society and their local community. All are willing to engage with people, whatever their perspective on life and wherever they hang out. Street Pastors was pioneered in London in 2003 and there are now over 14,000 trained Street Pastors commissioned working in more than 300 UK towns.

Currently there are 12 active Bathgate Street Pastors patrolling the town's streets two nights a month during 'pay weekends' when the town is at its busiest. Ideally, we would like to be out every weekend and hope to increase numbers to achieve this. We belong to churches throughout West Lothian and are aged from 18 to 70 plus. If you are interested in becoming a street pastor or simply want to have a better knowledge or understanding of what we do, please join us on patrol as an 'observer'. Be warned, however, that only after only a few hours with us, seeing at first hand the positive impact we have on our streets, you will catch the bug and will want to become more involved.

Street Pastors are non-judgmental, we are there to listen, care and help. We are not there to preach but will share our faith when asked.

We would be delighted to welcome anyone from the Crosswind readership who would consider joining our ranks to train as Street Pastors, or for us to come to church groups to tell what we do in our community. Please keep us in your prayers as we go about our work.

You can contact us by phone at 07717299955 or by email at Bathgate@streetpastors.org.uk.



EVERY LITTLE HELPS

by Rev Ian Walker

As I settle down to write this 'endpiece' the sky is grey and the weather anything but warm. Never mind I reassure myself – spring is just round the corner.

It seems as if grey clouds have been hovering over St Michael's in the last few months.

A number of members have lost loved ones, including our minister, Stewart, whose father died in February. There have been unexpected changes in the leadership which have left some people sad and perhaps a bit concerned for the future. At this time of year, and in this kind of situation, we all need a bit of encouragement; something to stir up anticipation and renew our hope.

A little story which I heard some time ago does that for me; perhaps it can bring a smile to your face as well! The person who told me the story guaranteed that it was true; he claimed that he was in Hong Kong when it happened and that he saw it himself.

A junk had become stuck on a sand bank and all the crew were trying to lever it free with great long bamboo poles. No matter how hard they tried there wasn't a sign of the smallest movement.

One of the crew members had his young son with him and the small boy was pretending to be like the big people. He got hold of a small pole and, as everyone else heaved and strained, he stuck his small bamboo under the boat.

Suddenly the junk lifted and slid back into the water!

The moral is obvious isn't it? Our little effort can make all the difference!



In difficult or discouraging times we all need to work together and put in that extra effort which might get us going again or even stop us getting stuck in the first place. Even more importantly, it might give that extra bit of encouragement and hope to someone else who is struggling and help them back onto an even keel.

A prayer from China

O Lord Jesus stay with me, dispel my loneliness!

In the long dark night, along the silent shadowy pathways,

I beg you to grasp my hand.

When others have forgotten me, Jesus please remember me. Amen

USEFUL CONTACTS

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tel: (01506) 842195

Auxiliary Minister

Rev Thom Riddell
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The Guild

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Parent and Toddlers

Margaret Henderson
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tel: (01506) 848502

Tracy Curle (3-11yrs)
tel: (01506) 207294

Paul Davidson (Bible Class 12-14yrs)
tel: (01506) 670075

Rev Dr Stewart Gillan (YF S3-S6)
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Girls' Brigade

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