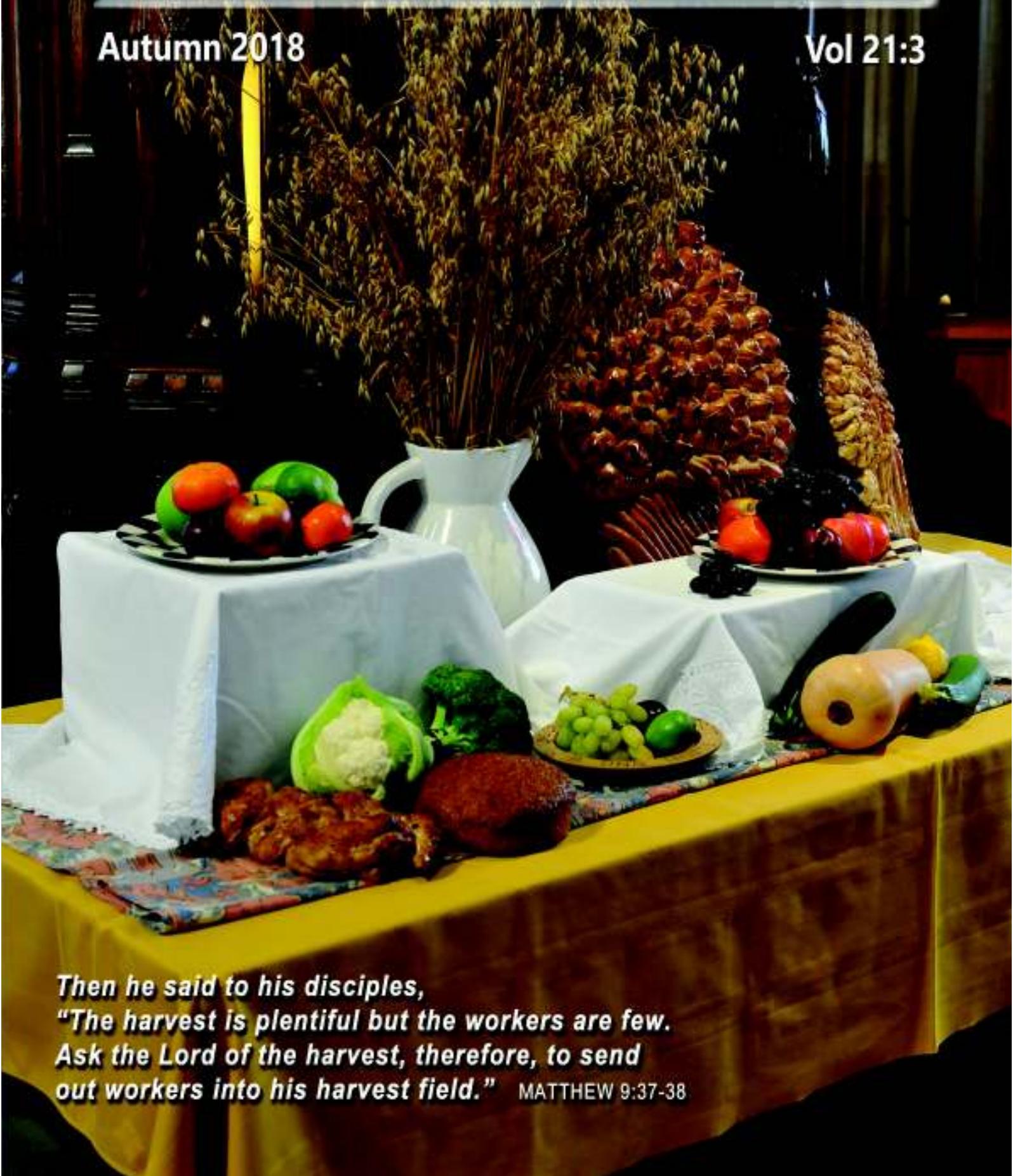


CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church

Autumn 2018

Vol 21:3



*Then he said to his disciples,
"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.
Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send
out workers into his harvest field."* MATTHEW 9:37-38

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SUNDAY SERVICES



Communion

Sunday 28th October

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

Monthly Communion

Sunday 25th November
at 12:15pm
Individual Cup

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Cover photograph courtesy of Stephen Blake

The deadline for the Winter 2018 issue is 3rd November 2018.

VIEW FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends,

'Grace to you and peace
from God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ.'

I write from Glasgow, that great city whose coat of arms will tell you of 'the bird that never flew, the tree that never grew, the bell that never rang, and the fish that never swam' – all stories related to St Mungo, or Kentigern if you prefer. My introduction to the tradition was via a lady whose son I had married, grandchild I had baptised and husband I had laid to rest during my time here. She rang the bell one day as we were preparing to move. In her farewell card was a silvery tree with a bird, bell and fish (with ring) in its branches. As she watched me read the words, written in her own hand, she could tell I did not know what to make of them. Thus did I learn a new story, from a Glaswegian living in Linlithgow. Helping with my change of horizons.



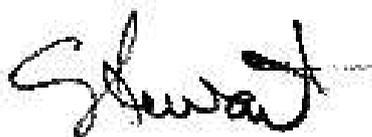
On behalf of my wife and I (!) and our children may I thank you most sincerely for your love and support at our farewell service, and for the marvellous travelling support that was your presence, so many of you, at my induction into St John's Renfield Parish Church. Your good wishes and greetings are before us in the cards you sent, happily displayed, as we settle into our new home. Sarah has given her parents a Skype tour of the manse and I fear yet more Canadians will be descending on the congregation fairly soon. Meanwhile, Alvin has been exploring his new domain, nosing round the garden and testing indoor options for lazing about.

When Myra and I discussed what I might do in a final View, I spoke of my desire to take a final tour round St Michael's, speaking of events in that wonderful space that live on in the memory. A bit ambitious for 800 words, you might agree. Still, one highlight seems to be irrepressible. I will discuss it in support of something Brian Lightbody said when we were looking at how we might tell the story of the faith and fabric of St Michael's. Though he took a personal and professional interest in the history of its architecture, he was more interested in the story of people's experience in the space it creates. In what they feel and what it means to them. We noted, for example, what happens when we move from the word architecture to the word acoustic when speaking of 'the acoustic created by the architecture.' How the word acoustic implies the presence of people, hearing, perchance listening, opening themselves, to music or the spoken word. An experience of sound and sense.

But back to that one highlight: I am thinking of the west door. Of seeing it, taking the steps that lead up to it and walking through it. That basic, entry-level experience. Allowing that for some this experience can be had only with difficulty, raising already the question of accessibility and assistance. Set in its weathered stone, the work of many centuries, a visitor may think it beautiful or evocative, but resist or fail to note what we might take to be its most important attribute: it opens. In this, first glance is all. If the door is open it is no longer merely venerable, it is alive in that moment as invitation. As intimation of welcome. If closed, the story does not get started. Of course, the invitation of an open door must be taken up for anything else to happen. Only as people enter is St Michael's able to spring its surprise: that revelation of beauty and majesty that waits for all who poke their head round the door. How often have we seen faces break into smiles, or that look of delight and awe come over a person? Or been the ones whose faces registered such experiences, even after repeated entries? Experiencing the vaulted greeting as if for the first time. A greeting redoubled by the words of welcome spoken live and in person by those who volunteer their time and are enriched in their encounters with those who come through the doors. People with their own stories to tell. To have gotten even that far into St Michael's is to have had a significant experience: the other side of the door. A living space.

How I shall miss it. And yet, it waits for me, for us all, daily. This experience of welcome, an expression of the grace and welcome of God in this place. Truly, it has been a privilege to serve you in Christ's name, and to have shared life with you. Please be assured that a warm welcome awaits you on Leicester Avenue in Kelvindale, and through the doors of St John's Renfield. And so we go on, severally yet together in the Spirit, into the future God has for us. God bless you.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart', with a flourish at the end.

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME IN AUTUMN

by Anne Law

We know that autumn is a time of gathering, of harvesting what has been sown and also a time for giving thanks to God for all that he has done for us – all he provides us with. At the Harvest service in church, you received a tea bag which hopefully provided you with an opportunity to sit quietly, spending time with God.

While looking for inspiration for this article, I visited the website of Stewardship.org, a Christian organisation dedicated to helping churches deal with, not surprisingly, stewardship. I read there that the average UK person will now live to be 81, which equates to 710,040 hours!

The author considered these hours as a lump sum to be invested well, giving her the opportunity to reflect how to prioritise her time. She contemplated the parallels between stewardship of time and stewardship of money – an interesting way to look at our time. We budget our money, try to stop spending on things of little value, and sometimes even manage to save!

If you carry the analogy forward into how we manage our time, in a work situation we all must come up with an annual departmental budget and account for that budget to get the best value for money. It is useful to remember this when considering how we spend our time – we must make the best use of that time God has given us.

In previous stewardship campaigns we have kept diary records of how we spend our time. It's always useful to use this kind of review to decide whether we are spending our time on the things that we value most and that give us the greatest fulfilment.

Again, at work we spend an inordinate amount of time in meetings. Using Skype and other online meeting software helps to reduce time spent travelling to meetings. Are there things that we do that we really need to cut out of our lives – or do differently? It's not easy to change our ways, but I hope that time spent with your cup of tea listening to God was time well spent. And there may be another little gift at the start of December...

Next year our stewardship topic goes back to treasure and you will be interested in a summary of our income and expenditure over the last 24 months:

	Aug 2016-July 2017	Aug 2017-July 2018	%change
Income	£371,048	£341,489	-8%
Expenditure	£325,392	£309,150	-5%
Surplus	£45,656	£32,340	-29%



A LETTER FROM REV JOHN POVEY, OUR INTERIM MODERATOR

The Manse of Kirk of Calder.
August 2018.

Dear friends,

Following the call to Rev Dr Stewart Gillan from the congregation and parish of St John's Renfield in Glasgow, the Presbytery of West Lothian appointed me as Interim Moderator, with effect from the date of Dr Gillan's induction service in Glasgow. Some of you will have met me in the past at various events, as I have been in West Lothian since 1981. I convened the visiting team which met with the Kirk Session and other groups involved in the life of the congregation in late 2013 and early 2014. I have also conducted worship in St Michael's on a few occasions. I look forward now to working with you in the months ahead and guiding you through this time of vacancy.

As I am sure you will be aware, circumstances have changed considerably in the life of the Church of Scotland in recent years. Over the last few years, generally speaking, there have been just over 200 charges vacant at any given time. There are around 1,000 charges and 800 ministers available. Presbyteries up and down the land are now trying to address this situation. The Presbytery plan for West Lothian was suspended in February of this year, with a view to drawing up a new plan over the course of the following months. This process is not yet complete, though well under way. Meantime, one result of the suspension of the former Presbytery plan is that congregations where the charge has become vacant, as in your own case, do not yet have permission to look for a new minister.

Although there is an unavoidable delay in moving matters forward in relation to a search for a new minister, in the larger scheme of things this is just the blink of an eye. I would encourage you, therefore, to consider this time of waiting in a positive way, not as a setback but as an opportunity.

Please remember that there is no such thing as a vacant congregation. The charge may be temporarily vacant, but the congregation is full of people, indeed very talented and capable people. While you are without a parish minister, all pastoral and preaching duties will be ably covered, and we plan to have a regular locum in place by the middle of November. Please use this opportunity as a learning experience, to work together and support one another in your congregational life, together 'building up the body of Christ' in this parish.

The Lord has led you over the years. He will be with you in the weeks and months to come, as a popular hymn reminds us, 'to urge and inspire you, cheer you on your way'. In due course, the Lord will guide you to a new ministry. Meantime, He is with you now to provide all the spiritual resources you need to make this period in the life of Linlithgow St Michael's Church a time of mutual blessing and encouragement.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

John Povey,
Interim Moderator.

Kirk of Calder



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NEW SESSION: NEW SESSION CLERKS

by Alan Miller

I don't often daydream about acquiring superhuman powers, but right now I'd definitely find it easier to prepare this article if I could time-travel to, say, the end of 2019. At the September Kirk Session meeting I will be sworn in as the new Session Clerk of St Michael's. But I'm writing this in August and, as various people who do know what they're talking about have told me, 'You don't really have any idea what's involved in being a Session Clerk until you do the job'. One helpfully added, 'The first year is the worst'. Hmm, maybe jumping forward 12 months isn't such a good plan after all...

So, despite my state of blissful ignorance, what can I tell you about this new role? To begin with, I am very conscious of standing on the shoulders of giants. In the 23 years Alison and I have spent as members of St Michael's, the Clerks have been Derek Henderson, Gordon Young, Anne Law and most recently Elma Birrell. Each has brought enormous commitment, wisdom and ability to the role. St Michael's has been very well served.

One advantage I will enjoy is that, for the first time, there will be three Assistant Session Clerks to share the workload. Ian Fowell who, through work moves has been an elder in more churches than some of us have had hot dinners, is already in post as Assistant Clerk and will focus on minuting the Session and other key meetings, as well as ensuring we comply with the new data protection regulations. Wanda Black will apply her business and organisational acumen to managing arrangements for Communion services, and producing our annual report and the other information we have to supply to the Church of Scotland centrally. Elma has kindly agreed to continue to support and oversee the church office and staff, and will link us with the wider church in West Lothian as our Presbytery Elder.

Still, some may question my sanity for taking on this role at the very time when we are entering into a vacancy, following Stewart's move to Glasgow. Indeed, the last 15 months has been quite a destabilising period as several key people have departed from St Michael's. Further, the Kirk Session agreed an ambitious 5-year '2020 Vision' in 2015, and while we have taken forward many of the actions set out in the plan, we are not seeing the church grow as we had hoped. So there is also a feeling of frustration, and perhaps confusion about where we go from here.

Although I have been involved in leadership at St Michael's in several ways over the years – taking services at Springfield and occasionally at the 'big church', chairing Session committees, and so on – I had never thought about becoming Session Clerk. While I was initially reluctant to allow my name to go forward, on further reflection I now recognise a calling to accept this position. I say that in all humility and in reliance on the Holy Spirit rather than on my own strength, because there's a great deal to do.



from left: Alan Miller, Wanda Black, Elma Birrell and Ian Fowell

During the 3 years for which I have offered to serve, a very obvious priority will be to find a new minister who can apply his or her gifts to lead us forward again as a church. But by the end of the period, I hope we will also see: Kirk Session re-focused on looking forward and outward; the main actions of our 2020 Vision successfully completed; and, in our increasingly secularised context, the whole church working prayerfully towards a renewed mission in which we can all share in finding new ways to touch the hearts of all and to see the kingdom of God growing at St Michael's.

The new Clerks team asks that you pray for us as we take up our new roles. But please pray also for the Kirk Session and for all of us as a church, that we will hear God as he calls us into the future – where He goes ahead of us – and that we will all respond and follow in renewed faith. Now that would be worth popping into a time travel machine to see and experience!

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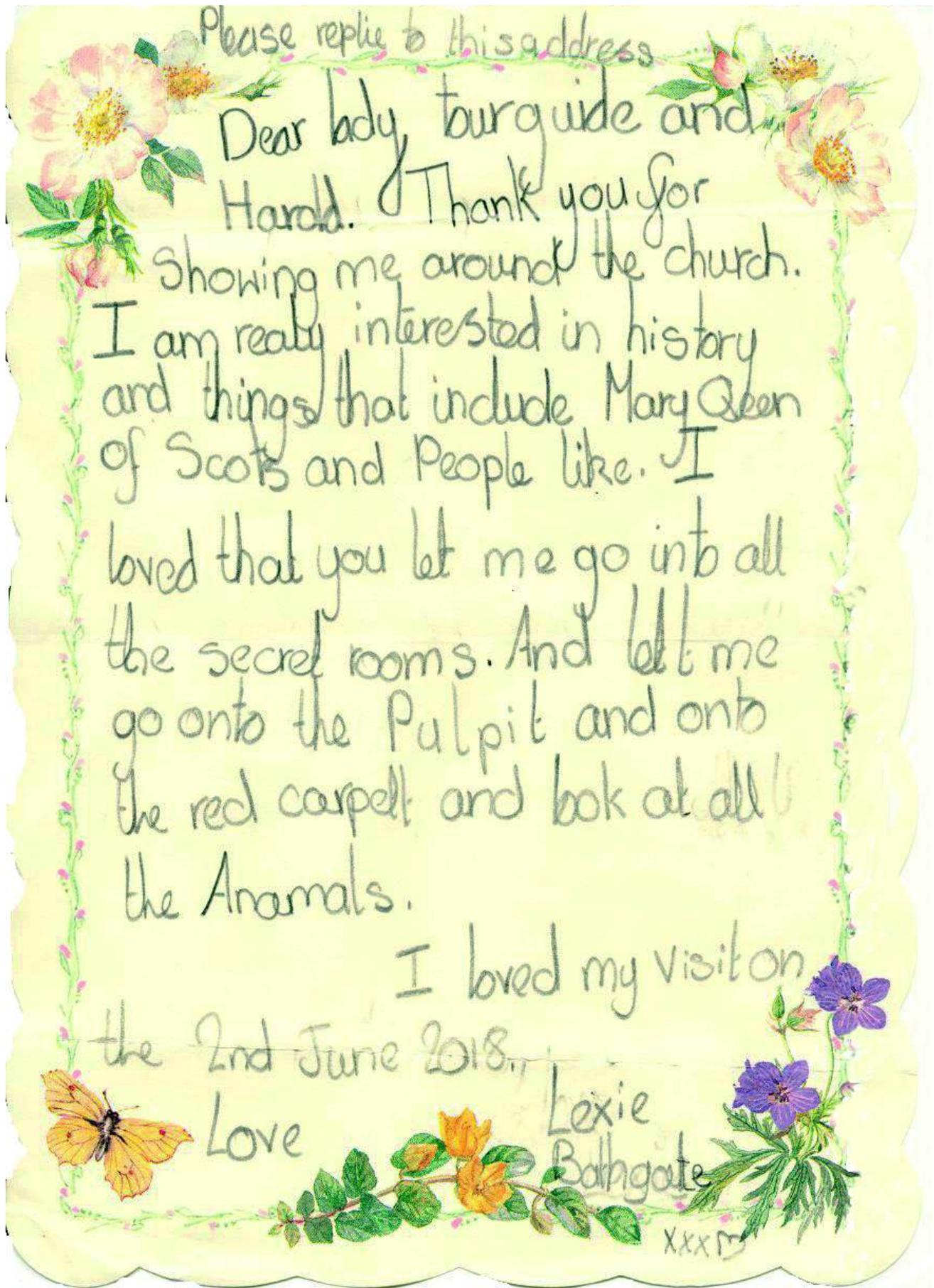
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Well done Jane Stewart and Harold Goodwin!



A NEW FACE AT THE ORGAN: MATT EDWARDS



At the end of May we welcomed Matt Edwards into the St Michael's family as Organist and Music Co-ordinator, and with his feet firmly on the pedalboard we thought we should find out a bit more about him. Matt was born in Aldershot, Hampshire and grew up as a chorister at the local parish church – also named St Michael's. Keen to advance, he formed a choir at school and gave performances in assemblies although his first outing as a conductor had been with the RCT Military Band aged 6!

Matt started piano lessons with Robin Walker, taking Grade 1 in 1988, however it was the organ he had his eye on. Organ lessons followed and as a teenager Matt would often deputise at local churches. Whilst studying for A Levels, Matt took on his first organist post; at Sixth Form College he played for the orchestra and big band, sang in various choirs and was often deputised for the music staff at events. He and friends organised a 24-hour music marathon to raise money for the restoration of the concert piano – great success; the vocal group sang carols outside the staff sleeping quarters at 6am!

At University in Winchester Matt joined a village church in Surrey and became involved with various ensembles. Organ tuition with Christopher Monks at Winchester Cathedral changed Matt's style and approach to organ music and accompaniment. Piano lessons at the University were changed into composition and harmony lessons as the tutor, Diana Owen, had studied under Herbert Howells. Matt also ran another 24-hour music marathon here finishing with *The Messiah*.

Matt wasn't happy at Winchester's Music and Education course, and developments in his music and organ performance made him look at a wider choice of options and consider what had previously seemed impossible. An advert appeared for the organ scholarship at Peterborough Cathedral and Matt applied. At Peterborough he was the third organist to the three cathedral choirs as well as Director of Music at a local parish church. At the cathedral he played for a minimum of two of the five midweek services, took rehearsals and deputised for other members of the department. At the parish church he formed and trained a choir. Matt also sang with the choir and was part of several recordings and broadcasts, including the BBC Songs of Praise Christmas special. Matt was Acting Master of Music for a fortnight, including directing the girls' choir for a special service with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In 1998 Matt became Organist and Master of the Choristers at St Paul's Cathedral in Dundee – the youngest person to hold such a senior music role in a UK cathedral. He worked and enlarged the traditional choir of boys and men through the busy schedule of services and other work. Matt was also asked to play for the Anglican Consultative Council, and personally for the Archbishop of Canterbury.



Matt was then Director of Music at Alloa West Church, with their famous Lewis pipe organ, where he organised a very successful concert series. He later moved to Thomas Coats Memorial Church in Paisley – the 'Baptist Cathedral of Europe', whose famous Hill pipe organ formed the centrepiece of an annual recital series he organised with organists coming from throughout the UK to play. The adult choir were also involved in concert work. Matt organised several 'come and sing' events, successfully raising funds for work on the organ, the highlight being a Messiah with an orchestra from the Royal Conservatoire

of Scotland. This was made into a CD. Matt also made a solo CD on the four-manual Hill pipe organ – has he mentioned that at all...?

Away from the church Matt is an active recitalist and a regular at Kelvingrove in Glasgow, recently completing his 100th recital on their Lewis organ. Other recent recitals included the cathedrals of Blackburn, Brecon, Chester, Dunblane, Hereford, Newcastle, Oban and Perth. Matt is a perpetual student and is currently finishing his fifth degree with the Open University – an MA in Creative Writing. He also holds several music diplomas and his many academic hoods have already been seen on Sunday morning.

Devastated by the news that Thomas Coats was facing closure, Matt decided to move on and – after a period of freelance work – has come to us. Ready, fresh, enthusiastic and already making his mark, he says: 'We have a tremendous resource here at St Michael's and some wonderful people. I look forward to working with everyone as we continue to show that music in worship is more than just a hymn tune and we have first class musical resources which deserve to be seen and heard by a much wider audience.'





THOUGHTS OF SOME YOUNG PEOPLE

Morag Mayland

My name is Morag Mayland. I am 18 years old and this September I will be moving down to London to study Musical Theatre for a year at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in Greenwich.

My journey with the Church has been a long and interesting one. I come from a Christian family, and have been going to Church all my life. I was baptised at a young age but I never really got stuck into church until a few years ago.

In 2015, the church asked me to be in their revival of 'The Seed Must Die' as Mary Magdalene. It was quite exciting considering I'd never had a lead role! It was a great time, not just because of the theatre experience, but I also got the chance to grow closer to the people of my church in a way that I enjoyed! After that, I started attending Youth Fellowship, and I began helping at Holiday Clubs as well. Eventually I became good friends with the youth workers and the other young people. I've attended Soul Survivor the past 3 years with them, which has turned into a highly anticipated event of the year for me. Recently, I've been trying to get involved in the rest of the church. I've helped create a church service with my YF, but I've also led a sermon by myself!



*Morag as
Mary Magdalene
in 'A Seed Must Die'*

One of the things I'm most excited about leaving home is definitely finding a new church. As much as I love St Michael's, I can't wait to see the variety of churches available in such a diverse city like London!

I feel as though I'm getting to a stage in my faith where I feel an urge to invite other young people to church and to talk and teach about my faith. There are lots of great resources for young people to get involved with church and their faith; varying from Youth Fellowship, books, YouTube series and much more! I only wish that these resources were promoted by the church more.

Young people are so important to churches, they're the ones that are going to carry on the church teachings onto the next generations. Understanding that young people are important and valuable to the church will not only help the church community grow closer together, but also make the church stronger and more welcoming to others.

Katie Stewart

My name is Katie Stewart. I am 17 years old and in September I will begin studying medicine at Glasgow University.

I was baptised at St Michael's and have attended since I was very young. My grandparents brought me to church weekly, and I worked my way up the Junior Church with a big group of my friends. I attended until I finished bible class, but afterwards I decided to stop to take a break.

I play the viola and played in a few orchestras at school, so when I was encouraged to come back and help at Junior Church playing in the Sunday Club band for the Nativity, I was very interested. Since then, I have become much more involved in the church. I have enjoyed my experience over the



past few years, mainly due to the variety of things I have been able to do, like playing in family band on communion Sundays, leading a session at junior church, and even speaking in front of the whole church for the children's address.

Over the past few years I have also helped at Messy Church and last year I helped out at Christingle, which I really enjoyed as I've grown up attending Christingle services. I'm extremely glad I returned to church and these openings have made me feel very valued as a member of the church. I hope these opportunities are continually offered to young people in the future.



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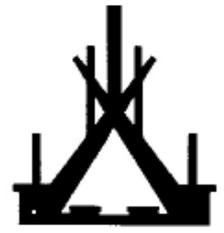
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PARISH REGISTER



WEDDINGS

They are no longer two, but one

May

Hannah Dougall to Ryan Cormack



June

Nicola Davidson to James Fowell
Kimberley Douglas to Craig Turnbull
Louise McCluskey to Iain Gibson

July

Jill Stanners to Stuart Hamilton
Eunice Olumide to Steve Frew

August

Emilie Cadiente to Harold Cadiente (Renewal of wedding vows)
Sheila-Allen Jemison to William Jemison (Blessing)
Lisa Walker to Graeme Birrell

September

Helen Dixon to Steven Kedward



FUNERALS

I am the resurrection and the life



June

Kathleen Atherton, Kinloch View

July

Paulette Overton, Tippethill Nursing Home (formerly Rivaldsgreen Crescent)

John Davidson, Holmesview Nursing Home (formerly Friars Way)

Tom Myles, Manse Road

Alexander Wann, St Michael's Hospital

August

Denis Leitch, Falkirk Road

Lisbeth Swan, Linlithgow Care Home (formerly St Ninian's Road)

Peter McIntyre, Braehead Drive



BAPTISMS

Let the children come to me



June

James Francis Colquhoun McLucas, Edinburgh

Ferris James McCredie, Avontoun Park

Knox William McCredie, Avontoun Park

July

Joe William Withnell, Moray Drive



World Mission Airways

Holiday Club 2018

Photos courtesy of Ashley Johnston

Through the week the children followed the journey of Moses from a baby hidden in the bulrushes to his leading the Israelites towards the Promised Land and heard how God was with him all the way.

Joy to Zambia.

Love to Jamaica.



Justice to Israel & Palestine.



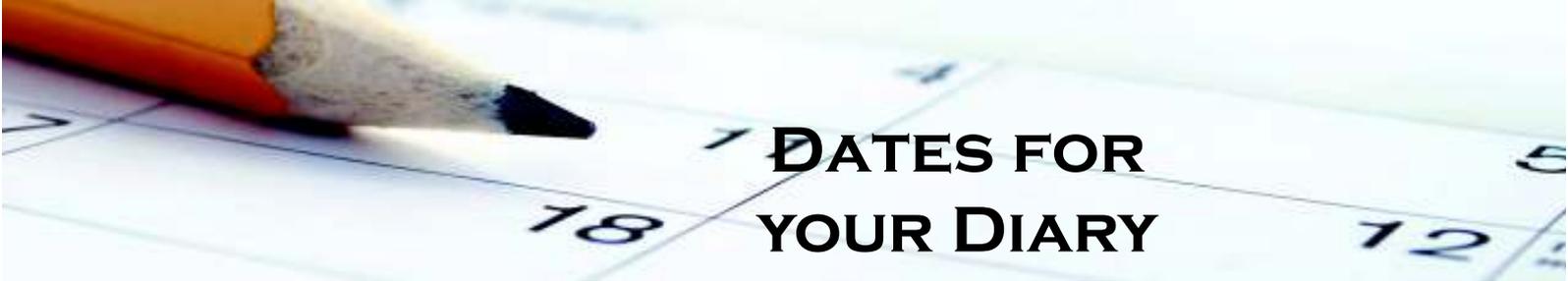
Hope to Italy.

Everyone took off on a World Mission Airways flight to a different country each morning and heard about a project there that shows God's love, hope, justice, joy and peace.



Peace to Korea.





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS

Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon in the Kirk Hall.

20th October	Stand up to Cancer
3rd November	Project Trust Fundraiser (Social Care in Cambodia)
24 November	Guild Advent Fayre (10am to 4pm)
1st December	4 th West Lothian Scouts
12th January	Linlithgow Academy Hockey Club
2nd February	Chogoria

EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

3rd November		Phoenix Choir
24th November	TBC	Linlithgow String Orchestra
2nd December	7pm	NYCoS Christmas Concert
7–8th December		Christmas Tree Event
16th December	7pm	Linlithgow Reed Band Christmas Concert
19th January	7.30pm	Linlithgow Arts Guild Concert

OTHER EVENTS

27th October	4.30pm	Messy Church at Halloween (Cross House)
17th November	7.45pm	Big Quiz Night – Tear Fund
15th December	4.30pm	Messy Church
2nd February	4.30pm	Messy Church

WEBSITES

www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk – 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 – For information on support available for most situations.

FAREWELL TO REV DR JUN SOO PARK

by Bob Ross

2018 has turned out to be a year of farewells for St Michael's. Among them was the departure of our former Minister in Association, Jun Soo Park who completed his PhD studies at Edinburgh University. He is now about to assume his duties as minister at St Andrew's United Reformed Church at Balham in London with a congregation drawn largely from the Korean community in London.



His departure has prompted messages of goodwill from his Scottish friends. Here is a brief taste of some of them.

'Dr Jun Soo Park was a valued scholar within our community, deeply committed to developing links between the churches of South Korea and the UK.' David Fergusson, Principal of New College, Edinburgh University.

'We have been through much together, in celebration and in sorrow. I thank God for the depth of your faith and your commitment to the life and witness of the Church of Jesus Christ.' Rev Dr Stewart Gillan.

'Dr Jun Soo Park widened our perspective.' Elma Birrell, Session Clerk of St Michael's.

'We were very friendly with Jun Soo, Bora and family when they were in Scotland. We shall miss them locally and wish them all the best for their time in London.' Bill and Anne Duncan.

'Dr Jun Soo Park acted as an ecumenical bridge, between the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Korea.' Rev Chang-bae Byun, General Secretary, PCK

Jun Soo himself says: 'God sent me to Linlithgow and I had a very happy time with all of you. When you visit London do not forget me. I will always welcome visitors from Linlithgow.'



SO WHAT'S THE GUILD ALL ABOUT THEN?

by Margaret Henderson

The 12 best bits!

- Having fun, fellowship... and eating together!
- Energising our 19,000 members in 850 groups from London to Unst and everywhere in between.
- Raising over £750,000 every 3 years for 6 projects at home and abroad.
- Bringing important issues like human trafficking and female genital mutilation to the heart of the church.
- Fostering positive relationships with Crossreach, World Mission, Faith in Older People, Alternativity, National Youth Assembly and other Councils of the Church of Scotland.
- Nurturing faith in members and friends.
- Coming together in thousands at major events to celebrate and showcase our fellowship.
- Galvanising members to take action on local, national and international issues.
- Encouraging young and old to work together in the church and the community.
- Providing hospitality and welcome to new people and those on the margins of communities.
- Growing grass roots initiatives through practical and financial support.
- Supporting the wider church to get involved with The Guild.

Impressed? Well, you should be. The Guild is often seen as an organisation for older women who are set in their ways. This could not be further from the truth as the action points listed above have shown. The Guild is now open to both men and women and often leads the way on important issues, as it did in bringing human trafficking and female genital mutilation to the attention of everyone in the church. Not very easy subjects for us to discuss but these were areas which needed highlighting and we were proud to offer our support.

This session we are supporting projects which reflect the Year of Young People. Firstly we are supporting the BB in their Faith in Young People Project and secondly we are supporting The Free to Live Trust in their Seema Project which tackles the prostitution of young girls in India, another important issue in our world today.



*Seema Project
Children's Home*

The Guild has set a new strategy for the next three years 'One Journey, Many Roads' and the theme for this first year is 'Seeking the Way'. Each one of us is on a journey, seeking the way ahead, a way which has many twists and turns that we probably never imagined as we set out.

Our programme for this year reflects this as we learn more about Hospital Chaplaincy, Scottish War Blinded, Spinning, Robert Burns and the Bible to name but a few.

Perhaps the highlight of our next session will be in February when we have a visit from The Rt Rev Susan Brown, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, who will share her journey with us. This will be an open evening when we will be joined by our friends from St Ninian's Craigmalen Guild and anyone from the congregation who would like to join us so do come along. You will receive a warm welcome as well as delicious home baking! I look forward to seeing you.



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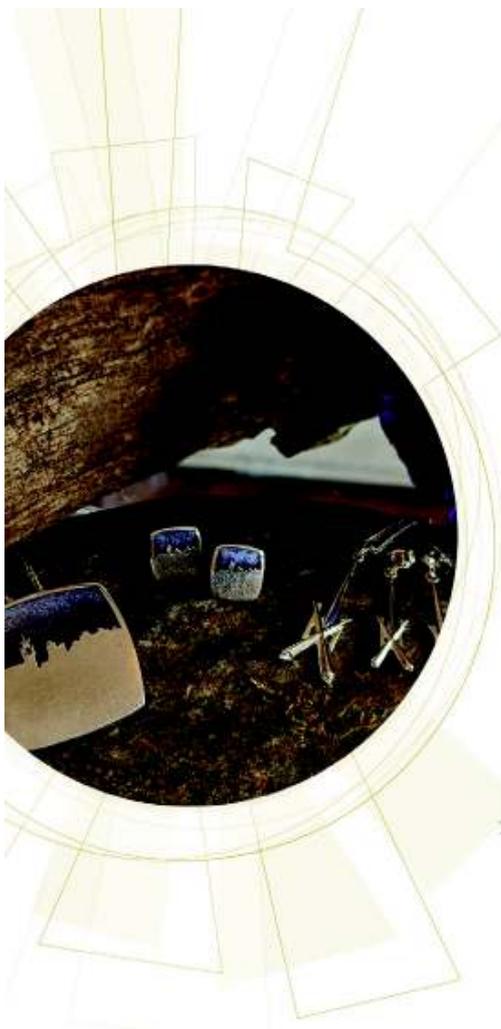
Our bespoke collection of silver jewellery inspired by Linlithgow Palace Skyline and St Michael's Church Spire now includes the 'Black Bitch' pendant and cufflinks. Available now in store.

10% of all proceeds from this collection are donated to Strathcarron Hospice.

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REACHING OUT TO YOUTH AND FAMILIES

by Trish Archibald

It is wonderful to be in post as your new Youth and Family Outreach Worker. Thank you sincerely for the welcome I have received. St Michael's is indeed kind to strangers! The Thursday Coffee Morning group have already very kindly donated £300 towards our youth ministry running costs. I am grateful for all the kindness shown to me by so many members of the congregation.

I have had the privilege of working in youth and children's ministry for most of my working life. After studying my first youth ministry role was in Shawlands Church of Scotland in Glasgow, which was an exciting and busy role working in the church and schools. From there I went to work with Scripture Union for several years in schools and churches throughout Ayrshire. I also have spent time working with Prospects, a wonderful charity which helps people with learning disabilities to be included in church.

I have a family of my own and know just how fast paced and demanding life for families can often be. As a church we have much we can do to support and encourage the families of Linlithgow.

At St Michael's we already have a considerable amount happening for children, young people and families. Over the last few weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet with several of our many volunteer leaders and helpers. It is clear St Michael's is a church that seeks to serve the people of Linlithgow and show the love of Jesus in many different ways. I am very much looking forward to serving the children, young people and families of Linlithgow with you!

With every blessing

Trish



MONTHLY PRAYER BREAKFASTS

by Alison Miller

The Mission and Outreach team has started a monthly Prayer Breakfast on the first Saturday of each month at 9am in the Adam Room, lasting no more than an hour. We feel that in a vacancy situation it is really important that we spend some time together praying for the future of St Michael's, giving thanks for what has been done in the past by ministers and congregation alike and asking God for guidance, resilience, patience – and anything else that you would like to pray about as we look to the future! Check the weekly intimation sheet and the church website for specific dates and please come and join us.



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The advertisement is enclosed in a black rectangular border. It features a collection of black and white line drawings of painting tools: a paintbrush, a roller, a tray of paint, and a bucket. The name 'Johnny Alves' is written in a large, bold, cursive font. Below it, 'Painter & Decorator' and 'Interior & Exterior' are written in a smaller, elegant script. The text 'FREE ESTIMATES' is in a bold, sans-serif font. The contact numbers are in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, it says 'Linlithgow based business'. The tool illustrations are positioned around the text, with one brush pointing towards the right side of the ad.

It really is not scary, you can come and pray silently if you wish. Wouldn't it be great if the Adam Room were full of St Michael's folk on the first Saturday morning of the month?

If Saturday mornings are difficult, there is prayer in church on Wednesdays and Time of Stillness on Thursday. Also there are always two members of the Prayer Team available on Sundays after each morning service.

If you are unable to come, please try to dedicate some specific time in prayer speaking and listening to God about our future.

Thank you.

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

Jesus would have seen farmers harvesting the fruit and vegetables below. Can you find them all in the word square? What do the left over letters spell out?

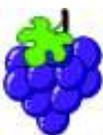
- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| almond | apricot |
| barley | bean |
| citron | cucumber |
| date | fig |
| garlic | grapes |
| lentil | melon |
| millet | olive |
| onion | pistachio |
| pomegranate | walnut |

A Harvest Memory Verse

As long as the earth endures,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat
Summer and winter,
Day and night
Will never cease.
Genesis 8, v22

Harvest Sudoku

Draw fruit in the squares so that each row, column and bold square contains one each of grapes, cherries, bananas and pomegranate.

NEWS FROM THE PROPERTY TEAM

by Jim Rae

Spring and summer have all but passed since our last report in May 2018 and we have been busy completing projects initiated early this year and planning new projects for the future.

The Electrical Fixed Wire Testing in Cross House and resulting remedial actions have been completed. Property inspections are scheduled for September, allowing time to prepare next year's maintenance plan and costs for budget inclusion.

Recommendations and an action plan were drawn up from the findings from the Fire Risk Assessment Consultant and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service reports, on all of our church properties. Additional heat and smoke detectors and klaxon sounders have been installed, as well as new fire doors in specific areas. The ceiling of the cupboard in Room 4 has been repaired. Pipework passing through the ceiling has been fitted with approved 'collars', to prevent the spread of fire between floors. The risk assessment report requires weekly fire monitoring assessment on all properties and risk issues logged, which must be attended to immediately. The fire alarm test monitoring team are reporting as requested.

Our insurance provider has requested that a robust strategy be implemented on rationalisation of key ownership, key distribution, storage and security. This will ensure that we are complying with the recent insurance assessors report and GDPR (General Data Protection Requirements). This process development is in hand and will be implemented soon.

Progress on the Church rainwater and toilet drainage project designs is slow. The appointed consulting engineers have had personnel changes within their operation which has curtailed progress. Detailed discussion to agree the best way forward will be required with West Lothian Council, Historic Environment Scotland and Scottish Water and it is hoped that this stage will be completed soon. The Church gutter rainwater lead lining protection project has a preferred bidder and external funding applications will shortly be underway. We thank The Friends of St Michael's for their generous donation of fifteen thousand pounds toward the cost of this project.

Three phases of repair work to the internal stone floor surface of the Church have been completed removing trip hazards. Floor areas will continue to be monitored.

The Property Team, on behalf of the Kirk Session, completed a funding application to the War Memorial Trust, to source financial support for the refurbishment of the Linlithgow War Memorial located in the Queen's Aisle. Procedure required that a conservation architect and experienced

architectural stone mason contractor be appointed. Gareth Jones (Conservation Architect) with Pollock Hammond Architects was appointed to oversee the project and Conservation Masonry from Glasgow, after a tendering process, were appointed as contractors. Our submission was successful and we have been awarded £14,255.00 towards the cost of the repair. West Lothian Council have confirmed that their contribution will be £4,800.00 which provides full cost coverage. Once the new stone material has been procured it will take several weeks to complete the project.

The architecturally unique west doors of the church are in need of refurbishment. The door surface condition, including decorative mouldings, requires stripping back to the original surface. Mouldings near the bottom of the panels require replacing, water ingress damage remedied, doors sealed, lacquered and waxed. It is hoped that the work can be carried out in situ as removal will require temporary security measures. An architectural woodworking contractor, highly experienced in this type of work, has been invited to appraise and provide a quotation to refurbish the doors.

The refurbishment of Cross House continues to progress slowly. A meeting with West Lothian Council planning department is scheduled to discuss the last refurbishment of the Cross House Flat and confirm building regulation relaxations that were applied to the property at that time. Another approach to an energy efficient heating system for the building is under discussion. The new Kirk Hall floor surface remedial work is complete and the task of sourcing new seating is well underway.

The Manse garden Leylandii hedging and a precariously leaning white poplar tree have been removed. This will allow better use of this asset, as the garden is hopefully brought back to life in the months to come.

The Property Team tidied up the Kirkgate, Kirk Hall entrance and the west door steps in preparation for the judging of the 'Britain in Bloom' contest. Thanks to those team members and partners who assisted.



A bride's veil was recovered from the high level walkway along the north parapet of the Church. A strong gust of wind had transported it to this high level whilst the bridal party were being photographed. The veil has been returned to the newly wed.

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.



100 years ago

28th July 1918 The Moderator reported that an appeal had been made by the Duke of Connaught on the behalf of the prisoners of war in Germany and suggesting that the collection taken at the joint service to be held on the 4th of August be given for that purpose. The Session agreed to this proposal.

8th Sept. 1918 A communication from the Moderators of Assembly of the Church of Scotland and of the United Free Church of Scotland was read relative to the rejection by the Scottish Grand Committee of the House of Commons of the amendment to the Education (Scotland) Bill 1918 approved by the two General Assemblies to secure religious instruction in all our public schools. The Session resolved to affirm its conviction that religious instruction should be given a place, safeguarded by statute, in the daily curriculum of primary, intermediate and secondary schools. The Clerk was instructed to send copies of the resolution to the Prime Minister, the Secretary for Scotland and the member of parliament for the constituency.

The Moderator stated that with reference to the restriction of Services in the churches, the minister had suggested that the evening services be held in Craigmalen church in November, the High Free in December and the Parish Church during January, to which arrangement the Session agreed.

50 years ago

17th. Sept. 1968 The Moderator reported on meetings and correspondence with the Ministry of Public Building and Works, as a result of which the Ministry had undertaken to contribute the sum of £150 per annum towards the cost of the attendance of the Church Officer as a guide to visitors to the Church. Originally the Ministry had stated that their contribution would commence in the financial year 1969-70, but as a result of representations it had been agreed that a payment of £75 would be made on 30th September 1968 and a similar one on 1st April 1969 with half-yearly instalments thereafter.

* A letter was submitted from Mr. Hugh Waugh, stating that he would be 65 years of age on 4th February 1969, and applying for an extension of his service as Church officer. [*The Session decided that the request be considered at the next Session meeting.*]

15th Oct. 1968 The Moderator explained that, along with the Session Clerk and Treasurer, he had conferred with Mr. Hugh Waugh, and that it had been agreed to recommend that Mr. Waugh's services as Church Officer be extended for one year to 4th February 1970, and that the whole question be reconsidered by the Session in October 1969. The Session accepted the recommendation.

25 years ago

25th. Sept. 1993 [*Church Restoration Project*] The Session Clerk advised that St. Michael's request for grant aid will be considered at the October meeting of Historic Scotland. The architects anticipate that the repairs to roof and upper walls will cost in the region of £325,000. with the total cost for all works approximately £800,000. The Session Clerk should be in a position to advise on the outcome of the Historic Scotland meeting by November at the latest when Kirk Session will have to decide how any possible shortfall is to be met.

The numbers taking Communion in June were as follows: 402 plus 6 at Braecourt, giving a total of 408. This compares with 619 in April, and 361 in June last year.

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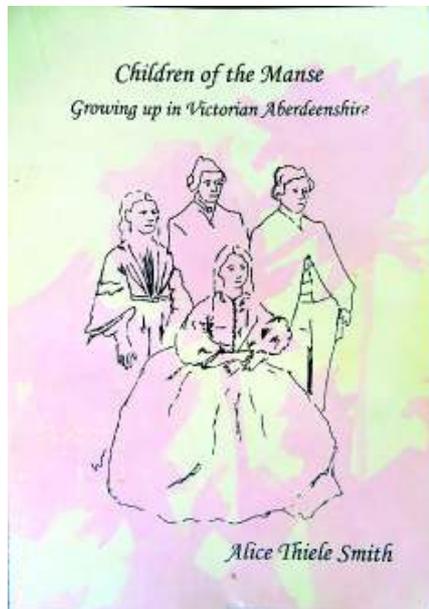
Continuing our series of book reviews



CHILDREN OF THE MANSE; GROWING UP IN VICTORIAN ABERDEENSHIRE

by Alice Thiele Smith

reviewed by Ken Mackenzie



There are many great Christian writers out there – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Tillich, Francis Collins, C S Lewis, to name a few of the heavy hitters.

My book is a little different – the story of Alice Thiele Smith, a daughter of the manse, 9th of 11 children born to a Free Church minister and former teacher. She was educated at home, ending up in Germany and marrying a German, Hans Thiele. Her regular notes of her life were eventually found by her great-granddaughter. Written in German and translated into English, they are the story of the joys and tribulations of Manse life.

Why this book? Gordon Brown, David Tennant, Angela Merkel, Asafa Powell, Eric Liddell, John Logie Baird – I could go on – all, like me, children of the manse – I am in good company! I read this book some time ago and gave a copy to my sister and brother. I recently returned to it and have been thinking about what it means to me.

It will never be a best seller!! It reminded me, however, how miserable, cold and inhospitable Victorian Manses were. I am, despite appearances, not Victorian but I was brought up in them. To say that they were uncomfortable and foreboding is to put it mildly. It reminded me that as the manse family you were always on show. Must behave and perform as required!

I remember how frightening Elders were; the affect Kirk Sessions would have on my father; how tittle-tattle, rumour and innuendo affected him and the manse family. Yes, we often saw the worst of people, including my father who was human and not Divine!!

So it is probably no wonder that none of us followed him into the Kirk. One of Alice's brothers, William Robertson Smith, was a minister and Cambridge Don – unlike him I have not been tried for heresy, YET!! Not, however, as bad as another son of the manse, Slobodan Milosevic.

BUT it also reminded me of why I am here today as a Christian, an Elder and member of Kirk Session, as is my sister and my brother was. As well as the worst in people, we saw the best: Christ in action; Faith in action; my father sitting

up all night with a young man whose wife was having a tough time in labour; rushing off at 2am to help young people in crisis and perform an exorcism; my Father's faith and doubts; the debates he had in the manse with other clergy (very spiritual in more ways than one!!); how important Christianity and the Church Family is to me.

I thought I had little in common with Alice Thiele Smith, until I started thinking of the joys, tribulations, deprivations and advantages we shared growing up in a manse. Although it is never going to be a best seller it resonates with me and my ongoing journey in faith.

Searching for Sunday

by Rachel Held Evans

reviewed by Alison Miller

This is an account of one person's journey from the confusion and hurt which resulted in her leaving her family church, through an exploration of Christianity's many different traditions and communities, to the beginnings of a road back to church life and the renewal that awaits when we are willing to give up and begin again.

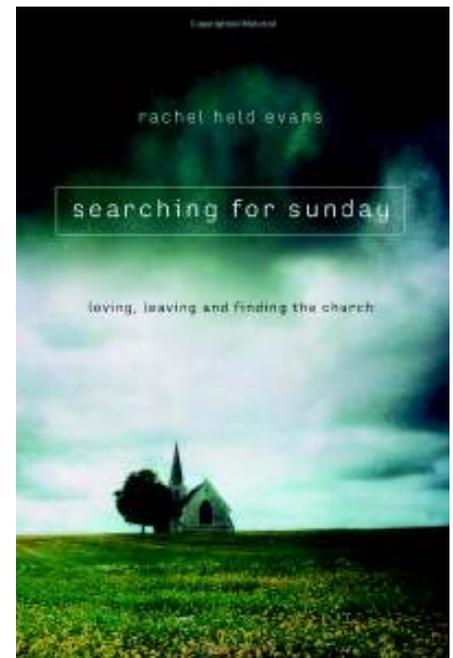
My daughter recommended this book to me, and the author is a similar age. I was very interested to explore the thoughts of this millennial generation, who have largely disengaged from the traditional church.

Rachel's style is easy to read, sometimes funny, sometimes heartbreakingly honest and sad. She says it was the sacraments (eg baptism, confession, marriage) which drew her back to church; 'they got God out of my head and into my hands: a reminder that Christianity isn't meant simply to be believed, it's meant to be lived, shared, eaten, spoken and enacted in the presence of other people. A community, which can be the church.'

As church attendance drops everywhere, this book does not offer easy answers, or a different way of doing church. There is no magic wand, but it does remind us what makes church, and offers hope going forward.

A quote from the book, reminding us of our resurrection faith: 'we can go around moaning as the shape of Christianity changes and our churches adapt to a new world, or we can trust that the same God who raised Jesus from the dead is busy making something new'.

At this time of change at St. Michael's, I would encourage you to buy this book, either electronically, or a 'real' one, perhaps from our local book shop. It's about 250 pages long, is an easy read, and will certainly help you to look at church through a different coloured window!



HOW IMPORTANT IS A SMILING WELCOME?

by Ruth Middleton

We have done much in St Michael's recently to make our church a WELL Church – Welcoming, Evangelising, Learning and Loving, and we know that there's still much to do. How important this is was brought home to us on a recent holiday.

We attended worship in a beautiful old church – even older than ours. The minister that day was also a visitor. He took every opportunity to talk about outreach and welcome – in quite subtle ways. He mentioned the many weddings he had taken this year and how many young couples had said that they regarded themselves as agnostics or atheists, but that after the wedding service they were going to rethink. He slipped in comments about welcoming visitors, the problems all churches face of missing generations and change. So much so that we fully expected to be welcomed by some members after the service. But no. Other than the preacher, no-one spoke to us. How sad was that? It was a church full of opportunity to do what we're trying to do – and failed. Will it still be a functioning church in future? Despite our experience, how we hope so.

So, a lesson for St Michael's? Many are working very hard to meet our goals. We are in a state of transition just now and what a challenge to use this time well. Let us pray for good, effective and listening leadership and real commitment from all to reach out to everyone who enters our church or contacts us in any way to let them know they matter to us – and yes, most of all, to God.

The following is an excerpt from a poem by Susan Hardwick, taken from a collection of prayers and readings reminding us that the people who cross our paths may be sent from God, bringing a divine message or blessing as angels are prone to do – but they come in unexpected guises, jolting us out of our familiar worlds and inclination to avoid them –



**Do not forget to
entertain
strangers, for by
so doing some
have unwittingly
entertained
angels.**

—Hebrews 13:2

'I remember well that day
So very well,
The day I entertained an angel unaware...
"Who are you?"
I whispered,
As he disappeared from view,
But in reality I knew –
As I have since always known for sure –
that day, that night,
I had entertained an angel unawares.'

USEFUL CONTACTS

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