

# CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church

Winter 2018



Vol 21:4



*Since ancient times no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him*    ISAIAH 64:4 (NIV)



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# SUNDAY SERVICES



## Communion

### **Sunday 27th January**

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 24th February**  
**at 12:15pm**  
*Individual Cup*

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Cover photograph courtesy of Stephen Blake

**The deadline for the Spring 2019 issue is 3rd March 2019.**



# VIEW FROM THE MALTINGS

*by Rev Thom Riddell*

At the beginning of a New Year, we can become more aware of the passage of time and how much we allow calendars and clocks to dominate us. Perhaps more frustratingly, how there is never enough time for what we need or want to do. It reminds me how time changes some things, but not others. Time helps to heal grief and softens the memories of old conflicts and wounds, but the mere passage of time does not strengthen friendship or character. We have to work at that to make it happen. Some memories are important because we can learn from them, and perhaps avoid repeating our mistakes. As I write this, I am preparing for the services which will commemorate the centenary of the end of the Great War, which was called the 'war to end all wars'. Sadly that was not the case, and time and again since then we have repeated the mistake of thinking that conflict can solve anything. That is not to say that we should not stand up against evil, but we should never forget the cost in human lives which is involved.



One of the traditions at the beginning of a new year is that we make resolutions that we will change something in ourselves that will make us a better person. We may start out with good intentions, but we seldom sustain the change for very long, and soon lapse back into our old ways. Perhaps what we are looking for is a miracle that will make the change we are seeking.





Jesus' first miracle began with ordinary water poured into commonplace stone jars. As far as we know, Jesus didn't stir the water, touch the jars or pray aloud. He simply asked that the wine should be served to the wedding host.

Obediently serving the host, the servants were amazed to discover that the water had been transformed into wine.

John tells us that by this miracle Jesus '*revealed his glory*' to his watching

disciples. What did the disciples see that was so glorious? They saw that in Christ's powerful presence, transformation happens. Ordinary water becomes extraordinary wine as willing servants do what Jesus asks them to do.

A similar quiet miracle of transformation happens in our lives. When we seek the presence of Christ, through reading and meditating on scripture, and through prayer, the Holy Spirit changes us gradually into our Lord's likeness. As we pour ourselves out in obedient service, we can become more and more like Jesus. Our ordinary lives can become extraordinary, but it doesn't always happen as quickly as we might wish.

A new year reminds us that God's time is different from ours. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul wrote '*when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son*', but we do not know God's timetable for the future. When his disciples asked him to tell them the timing of future events, he reminded them that only God knows what lies ahead of us.

In the past year our Stewardship Team has been encouraging us to use our time better, making sure we take time to be with God, to give space in our lives to prayer and listening, to being still and knowing that God is present.

The best new year's resolution any of us can make is to appreciate each day God gives us, to become a better steward of our time, and to grow to be more Christ-like, that we may serve God using the talents and abilities he has given us. We also need to be willing to accept that God does not work to our timescale. A vacancy is always an uncertain and challenging time for a congregation. If we all make time to be patient, and wait for God to show us the way forward, we will be ready to welcome whoever God calls to be our new minister.





# AN INTRODUCTION BY OUR NEW LOCUM

*Rev Colin Johnston*

When John Povey telephoned me, it was like an answer to prayer! After 25 years working overseas with World Mission, I had decided that now was the time to move back to Scotland. The process of returning to a parish was not as easy as I had thought, but ultimately I was given the go ahead to look for a parish – on the proviso that I act as a locum first, in order to reacquaint myself with the Church in Scotland and readjust to life in what is a different country to the one I left 25 years ago! The committee also told me that it was up to me to find a locumship – which is precisely when John phoned me!



So let me introduce myself. I am originally from Ayrshire, growing up in Auchinleck, where my father was minister. I studied at St Andrews and Edinburgh universities, before being ordained to my first charge of Larkhall Trinity in 1986. I spent seven happy years there, but had always held a fascination for the World Church, so at the beginning of 1994 I started to serve as a mission partner with the United Church of Zambia, working in rural and urban areas, before teaching at the theological college for my final four years. AIDS was a major issue at this time, and my congregations were in the forefront of 'breaking the silence' over HIV and AIDS.

After 15 years in Zambia, it was time to move on to new challenges and I was appointed Minister at Tiberias in the Holy Land (Stewart Gillan was on the interviewing committee!). I was especially involved networking with Palestinian Christians in the Galilee, including St Michael's partner congregation at Reineh!

Next, I moved to Cairo, where I have been working in the seminary of the Presbyterian Church for the last two and a half years, but also have been heavily involved with refugee work. I was associated with St Andrew's United congregation, the old CofS. I enjoy walking (broken ankles permitting!), old churches, opera and classical music. In Zambia I was called 'Rev CDJ' while in Egypt 'Pastor Colin'; feel free to call me what you want! I look forward to working with you at St Michael's and getting to know the Linlithgow area.



# SEEDLINGS TODDLER CHURCH

*By Trish Archibald*

Seedlings is a busy, noisy and fun expression of church! For many of our Seedlings friends it IS their church. Just like a Sunday service, it is where we meet every week to worship God. We do this in a very joyful way with simple songs that little ones can remember, with simple teaching, with prayer, crafts and fellowship. We have a dedicated and talented team of volunteers who play music, spend time planning and organising crafts that are linked to our teaching, serve teas and coffees and spend time building up relationships with both the children and their carers.



Since I became part of the Seedlings team it has been a blessing to learn each week with the children simple truths about God. There is something beautiful in simplicity. We grown-ups often make things too complicated and Seedlings has a special way of refreshing us with its innocence. Since July, we have learned that God loves us, God made everything, and that we can talk to God and he always listens. We have learned a new song and the lyrics are simple but powerful!

God can do anything, anything at all

God can do anything, anything at all.

Nothing is too big for Him, and nothing is too small,

God can do anything, anything at all.



Each week we have little ones and their carers (parents, grandparents and child minders) always on time, eager to get started. We have little musical shakers that the children love using during worship time and they make a very joyful noise! The children vary in age from tiny little babies up to 4-year-olds. They listen as well as they can and take in much more than we realise. I discovered this when I was told off by a two-year-old for forgetting to give



them their weekly wee sticker at the end of our time together! Seedlings is in many ways everything that you would expect a church to be. It is inclusive of all children and carers, Seedlings is never bothered by a bit of noise – it is welcoming and warm, it has a team who care about those who come each week, it is a place of learning together, laughter, friendship and support for one another. As our sign in the Kirk Hall says, Seedlings is all about God's love. It **is** all about God's love. I'm sure I speak for the whole team when I say that each week we leave Seedlings knowing that love a bit more than we did before.



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# SESSION TEAMS – WHO, ME?!

*by Alison Miller*

As a fairly new elder I have been trying to understand how Kirk Session works and what part the session teams play in the running of St Michael's. It is fairly obvious that the teams were created to divide up the many jobs that are involved in running a large congregation and a beautiful historic building, but what do they all do and who can take part? I thought I would ask our new session clerk Alan Miller (since we live in the same house) about this.

**Me:** So how many teams are there and what do they do?

**Alan:** There are 13 teams in total and about 60 of our 100 elders are involved in them. Some teams pretty much do what they say on the tin, but some need more explanation. Here we go, with the names of the team conveners as well.

1. Co-ordinating team (Peter Russell) – to help keep the team structure working effectively.

2. Business team (Peter again) – to ensure the effective use of the Church's human, financial and property resources.

**Me:** Eh, just a minute, I'm not clear about that one!

**Alan:** They look after the money, the buildings and the staff, with input from the next 2 teams:

3. Stewardship and Finance team (now Anne Law) – to oversee money matters and assist the Church Treasurer.

4. Property team (Jim Rae) – to look after the church building, Cross House, the manse and gardens.

**Me:** Those guys must be kept busy! I've heard they have a full time job there. They'll need a lot of help.

**Alan:** Well yes, the Property team has the most members, and they do work very hard!

**Me:** OK, Education team next –

5. Education Team (Anne Bennie) – to help everyone learn about Jesus and the Bible, young and old alike.

**Alan:** Got it in one! Then we have the:-





6. Pastoral Care Team (Tom Brown) – to support the ministry team and elders in caring for the congregation, often with a listening ear. Their work will be even more important during our vacancy.

7. Communication Team (Ivan Coyle) – they manage the website and our Facebook page, oversee Crosswind, and look after the sound and projection systems in church.

8. Music & Worship Team (Elma Birrell) – they work with the ministers to find ways to enrich the worship life of the whole church.

9. Open Church (David Timperley) – this team organises the rota to allow the church to be open to visitors during the week, and prepare guide books and information.

10. Fellowship Team (Margaret Johnston) – their job is to enrich the fellowship of the whole church and everyone connected to it.

**Me:** This often seems to involve food and drink, but there are other means, like wedding dresses and Christmas trees!

**Alan:** Absolutely. And let's not forget the:-

11. International Team (Fiona Duke) – they encourage us to support the work of our prayer partners and other international Christian work.

12. Mission and Outreach Team (your good self, Mrs Alison Miller) – this team's job is to help us gossip the gospel and encourage us to become a Welcoming, Evangelising, Loving and Learning Church.

13. Social Justice Team (Ken Mackenzie) – they encourage our involvement in social justice issues both local and national. Church members are involved with many projects: LYPP, Crossreach, the Foodbank, Bethany Trust, Safe Families for Children, and Christian Aid to name but a few!

**Me:** that certainly makes you realise how much work is involved. There is also an events team which looks after the practicalities around all sorts of events in the church. Do you need to be an elder to be part of a team?

**Alan:** No, any interested member can be involved with a team. It would be great to have more people using their talents for the church. Or perhaps some people would like to help for certain events, or with particular skills.

**Me:** So if you enjoy gardening, or play an instrument, or have a heart for visiting folk who are sick or elderly, or you're handy with a paint brush, or need a reason to do some baking – we can put you in touch with other people with the same interests! Whatever you might like to contribute, please either speak to the team leader named above, or contact the church office:- [val@stmichaels-parish.org.uk](mailto:val@stmichaels-parish.org.uk)



# A TIME OF THANKSGIVING

*by John Needham*

'O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures forever.'  
(1 Chronicles, Chapter 16, Verse 34)

Throughout 2018 we've focused our Stewardship efforts on how we spend that most scarce of resources – Time. To recap, here are the topics we've covered:

**A Time of New Beginning** – at Easter we reflected on Jesus' Resurrection and we all received a bulb to plant – the picture shows a beautiful bloom from one of those tiny bulbs!

**A Time of Unwinding** – in the summer we focused on the need to recharge our batteries.

**A Time of Gathering** – for Harvest we thought about sharing the bounty we receive every year from land, air and sea.

To complete our Stewardship of Time for the year we conclude with **A Time of Thanksgiving** which seems very appropriate as we approach the season when we celebrate the greatest gift we could ever receive at Christmas, the Son of God. By the time you read this article you will have heard a sermon delivered in church or online on 2nd December stressing the importance of us giving thanks for what we have. This can be hard sometimes, when perhaps we are ill, or are encountering difficulties in our lives or relationships. However our faith in God's love helps us work through even the toughest of times.

The build up to Christmas can often be dominated by many 'things' that the marketers think we all must have. Yet, the most treasured gifts we receive are often simple acts of kindness, friendship or time with family and friends. So, as we look back on what will inevitably have been a hectic time for many, it is important that we take time out to be thankful for all of the gifts we have received.

As we look forward into 2019, we will be focusing our efforts on Stewardship of Treasure as part of the three yearly rotation of our Stewardship activities between the equally important topics of Time, Treasure and Talents. As in previous years it will be an opportunity to review what we give financially to the church to reflect our own changing finances.





There will also be opportunities to contribute to specific projects and the first of these is the refurbishment of the wooden doors at the main entrance to the church. The West Doors, as they're known, are deteriorating and need significant work to ensure they are maintained for the future. The estimated cost is in excess of £13,000 and Kirk Session has agreed that **a Gift Day will be held on Saturday 30 March 2019** when donations will be received for this important project.

More generally our greatest financial challenges were outlined at the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, 7 October, namely:

- \* In recent years we have seen a steady decline in regular donors.
- \* 15% of the people giving, contribute 50% of the total donated.
- \* The age profile of our congregation is rising and the risk of losing more donors is increasing as a result.

So, as we rightly give thanks for what we have, it's critical that we pray for the work of the church and consider our financial giving as a proportion of the bounty that we receive. It will take a concerted effort by all of us to overcome these challenges in the year ahead.



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# GO BY THE BOOK

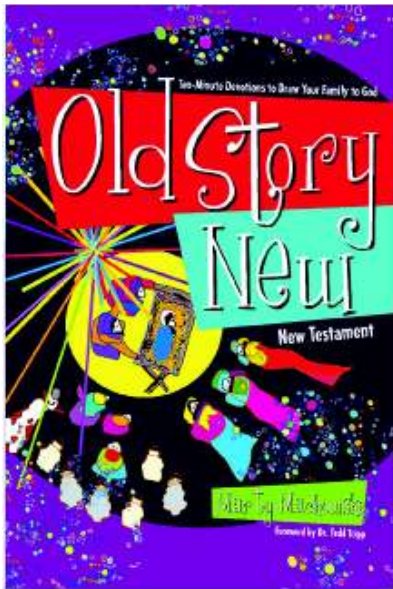
*Continuing our series of book reviews*



## **'Old Story New'**

by Marty Machowski

*Reviewed by Alison Tunncliffe*



I was conscious that I wasn't spending enough time reading the Bible at home, and decided to look for a daily study. It struck me that a devotional that we could use as a family might work well, and so looked through book reviews until I found Marty Machowski's 'Old Story New – Ten minute devotions to draw your family to God – New Testament'. The study includes a Bible reading, followed by the author's interpretation of the verses, a few questions and a prayer. The author's interpretation is really useful, not just for explaining the text to the children, but also for Andy and me; we have all learned a lot from these explanations.

I believe it works so well for us because we are creatures of habit; it has become part of our routine, and the children help to make it happen. They come through when the alarm goes off each morning and make themselves comfy at the bottom of the bed. The studies are short but thought provoking – the first ten or fifteen minutes of the day are spent together as a family and together with God, and it is lovely to start each day thinking about and talking to Jesus. I'd firmly recommend this family bible study guide.

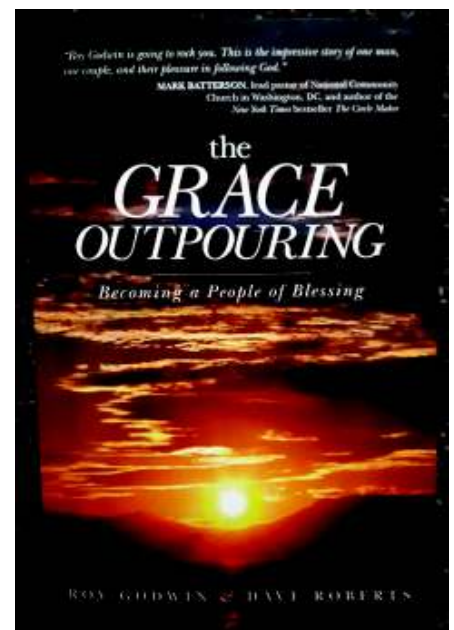
## **The Grace Outpouring**

by Roy Godwin and Dave Roberts

*Reviewed by Anita France*

He was an ordinary middle aged married man with his own ideas about how God wanted him to serve. He and his wife were quite certain they didn't want to take over a small retreat centre in Wales. They didn't have the correct gifts, enough money or any wish to do so.

The book describes how God changed their minds and persuaded them to accept the job offered at Ffald-y-Brenin and what happened then.





The book describes Roy's amazement and growing trust in God, His love and longing for people to love Him and worship Him and what He did through this small and then insignificant Welsh retreat centre.

As I said during the morning service don't read this book if God doing miracles nowadays or the Holy Spirit moving strongly in people's lives worries you because, guess what, that is exactly what happens. Ffald-y-Brenin is an actual place. You can look it up online, phone them, buy things from their shop and visit them, I've done all these things except the last. I found the book amazing and exciting, please read it.

## **Chasing Francis: A Pilgrim's Tale**

by Ian Morgan Cron

*Reviewed by Anne Law*

This book is the story of a minister in a huge evangelical church in the United States who has a crisis of faith. The book introduces themes such as – what does it mean to be church, and it links the present state of the church with the past, namely with the time of St Francis of Assisi.

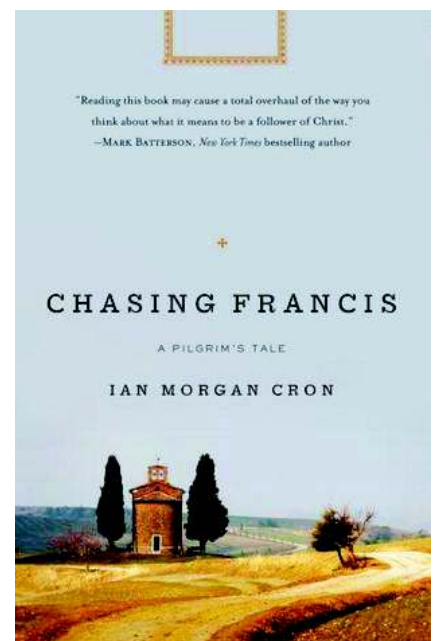
The pastor, Chase Fallon, says that following Jesus used to be so tidy and he starts to doubt his faith. His elders suggest a two-month sabbatical.

His uncle Kenny invites Chase to Italy for his sabbatical and tells him that he knows someone who can help Chase, Giovanni di Pietro di Bernadone, usually known as St Francis of Assisi.

Chase is astonished. How can a 13th-century Catholic saint possibly help him? Kenny replies that he thinks that a priest in the Middle Ages could easily have shared a similar disillusionment. The church has been here before. The Middle Ages was a period of transition, with people fed up with the old ways of following Jesus.

So Kenny and Chase set off on a pilgrimage, a road trip in search of a spiritual homeland. Chase keeps a journal of his travels and reflects spiritually in it. He writes at one point: 'Dear Francis, Tonight was one of those rare times when I felt like the curtain between Heaven and earth became very thin'.

His journey shows that there is no easy formula for being the church in the 21st century, or for following Christ.





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# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

## 1ST MARCH 2019

*by Fiona Duke*

### COME, EVERYTHING IS READY

The World Day of Prayer 2019 service has been prepared by Slovenian women. Slovenia as a country only became independent in June 1991 after a long history of occupation and latterly was a part of Yugoslavia. It has experienced racial, religious and cultural tensions over the centuries. It is now a small nation but a country of great beauty.



The theme this year is 'Come everything is ready' based on the parable Jesus told about the wedding feast that a king had prepared. When the invitation went out to the invited guests they all declined so the king sent out another invitation to all the people in the streets – the bad as well as the good – and all came in (Matthew 22 v14).

This year the Slovenian women are inviting us all to come to God's Feast and join in the celebration of worship and prayer, not just in Scotland but around the world. It is an invitation not just for women but for everyone – men, women, young people and older people. This service is celebrated around the world and so, with the different time zones, the first services will be in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world – through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later. So here in Linlithgow we will be part of a wave of world prayer

The churches of Linlithgow send everyone, whoever you are, whatever your age an invitation to come to this service – a feast of worship and prayer for the world. There will be a service at 2.30pm in St Michael's Hospital, and in the evening 7.30pm in St Michael's Parish Church. So come to the Feast on Friday March 1st at 2.30pm in St Michael's Hospital or 7.30pm in St Michael's.



# PARISH REGISTER



## WEDDINGS

*They are no longer two, but one*



### **September**

Laura-Jane Corbett to Stephen Findlay

### **October**

Christine Crespo to Marc Ewen

## BAPTISMS

*Let the children come to me*

October

Ella Rose Wallace, Larbert

**November**

Courtney-Rae Ritchie-Laing, Falkirk



## NEW MEMBERS

*For we are all members of one body*



Jean Nale, St Magdalene's  
Fiona Campbell, Kingsfield



# FUNERALS

*I am the resurrection and the life*



## October

Jane Thomson, Springfield Road  
Dr Michael Orr, Morningside Manor Nursing Home (formerly St Ninian's Way)  
Pamela Watson, Rockville Grove  
John Russell, Highfield Crescent  
Maureen Sinclair, Bonnytoun Terrace  
Barbara Morrison, Braehead Road



## November

Henry Watters, Champany Holdings  
Fionna Stedman, Kinloch View  
Arthur Brown, Springfield Road  
Margaret Thomson, Kinloch View

## December

Isobel McAdam, Bailielands





# EXILES

**The Inspiration** – the constant, tragic reports and pictures of refugees from all over the world – faces that could be our parents, children, friends – shattered buildings that could be our homes, our beautiful church, our High Street – people like us who have been forced to decide – ‘Shall I stay, or shall I go?’ Leave all that is familiar and dear but with the risk of war, famine, degradation, for the unknown, perhaps better – who knows?

Be a part of **EXILES** as the community of St. Michael's Parish Church explores this story together in drama, poetry, art, music and song. Incidents and stories from Jesus' family's exile will unfold on screen interwoven with live performances powerfully illustrating how Jesus continues to suffer with those who are forced to leave their homes and make their way through fear and danger.



**EXILES** has already started! All the filming is done – you might recognise some of the characters.

Don't worry, you haven't missed out, we are looking for singers of all ages – children, teenagers and adults to form and join different groups for 3 performances of **EXILES**.

Ability to read music not essential, enthusiasm is!

**How does it feel to be a refugee?**  
– it's difficult to imagine – but God knows  
– Jesus and his family were refugees as they fled from Bethlehem to Egypt, made a life there and then returned back to their home town.





Rehearsals will start in January although times and frequencies will vary for the different groups and we'll make lots of use of rehearsal tracks.

Nearer the time there will be further opportunities to take part as stewards, technicians, selling programme, serving refreshments, car parking and other tasks we haven't even thought of yet!



St. Michael's productions are always a great way to get to know other people as well as raising money for a good cause – in this case Church of Scotland's programme for Refugees.



Think you might be interested?  
Email **EXILES2019@gmail.com**  
or contact the church office.

Be a part of **EXILES.**





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### COFFEE MORNINGS

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

2nd February	Chogoria Coffee Morning
16th February	Linlithgow Grange Rotary
9th March	Friends of Girl Guiding
16th March	2 <sup>nd</sup> West Lothian Explorer Scouts
30th March	4 <sup>th</sup> West Lothian Scouts

### EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

24th February	3pm	Girl Guiding Thinking Day service
8th March	7pm	Exiles – Music/drama@stmikes
9th March	2pm & 7pm	Exiles – Music/drama@stmikes
28th April	3pm	Scouts St George's Day service
15th May	7pm	GB Parents Evening

### OTHER EVENTS

2nd February	4.30pm	Messy Church, Cross House
24th February	4pm	Thinking Day Service Refreshments
23rd March	4.30pm	Messy Church, Cross House
6th April	3pm	Guild Afternoon Tea, Cross House

### WEBSITES

**[www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk](http://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](http://www.helpcentre.org.uk)** – For information on support available for most situations.



# ST MICHAEL'S PASTORAL VISITORS

*by Sheila Rae*

Who are the Pastoral Visitors?

The Pastoral Visitors are a team of specially trained people who are members of St Michael's Parish Church. They have all been safeguarded and meet regularly for training and support. The visiting service is free and confidential and is open to all, whatever the need. We presently have 20 Visitors who are visiting 27 people.

What do they do?

The visitors draw alongside to listen and chat if you are unable to get out of the house and would like some company. If you are able to get out, but require someone to go with you, then the visitors can accompany you for coffee, shopping or for a drive. Has seeing to read become more difficult? Then a visitor could read the *Crosswind* to you, for instance, or anything of your choice.



Who do they visit?

As well as calling on the elderly and housebound, the visitors support families and young people. Sometimes things can be a bit hectic when a new baby arrives and you have other children. The visitors can help by taking baby out or by helping with the other children until you settle into your own routine.



Some people need support at times of illness or some other stress.

A visitor can often signpost to other services, including those that offer financial help.

If you would like to have a pastoral visitor, then do please contact Tom Brown, Pastoral Care Team Convenor, on 842508 or the Church office on 842188.

Would you like to become a Pastoral Visitor?

If you feel that you have a heart for drawing alongside others and would like to explore this opportunity, then please do contact Tom Brown for an initial discussion. We are looking to recruit many more visitors and we would love to hear from you. This is a great volunteering opportunity!



# PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE CHURCH

*by Ian Fowell*

*St Michael's Data Protection Co-ordinator*



No, this is not a homily on the constancy and dependability of the Church in time of trouble but, more mundanely, an explanation of how we keep your personal data safe!

St Michael's, like any other organisation or business, must conform with 'GDPR' – the General Data Protection Regulations. That means we must keep your personal data safe and only use it for legitimate purposes.

We need to use it in accordance with the six 'Data Protection Principles.' It must:

- be used fairly, lawfully and transparently;
- be collected and used only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary;
- be accurate and kept up to date. Any inaccurate data must be deleted or rectified without delay;
- not be kept for longer than is necessary; and
- be processed securely.

In addition, we are accountable for these principles and, if required, we must be able to show how we meet them.

## **So what information do we hold?**

If you are a member of St Michael's or an adherent, or a member of any of our organisations, we hold your name and contact details so that we can get in touch with you. If you give by gift aid, we hold a record of your givings so that we can claim back the tax – but we don't keep a record if you don't use gift aid. In addition, we keep information on weddings, baptisms and funerals, and on bills and payments. We also keep employment records on our staff, and also a safeguarding register of people who have been approved to work with children or vulnerable adults.

But 'data' doesn't just mean facts like names and addresses. Under the new regulations it is clear that a person's image is classed as personal data, so any photograph we hold in which a person is identifiable is also classed as 'personal data'.



## **And there's more ...**

But for religious organisations, there is an added twist. Since May 2018, data relating to religious or philosophical beliefs is 'special category data' and cannot be shared outside the Church without the person's consent.

Since non-members and members of the public are in and out of the Church, Kirk Hall and Cross House all the time, and look at our publications and website, then we must make sure that no-one's name, contact details, photo, etc appears in any of our buildings, or on the website, social media or in publications (such as this *Crosswind*) without their permission. This is quite a big task, and we have been contacting anyone whose contact details or photo is used, to ask for their consent. An alternative approach for group photos, such as in a church service or group activity, is to announce that photos will be taken in a particular area and to allow people to sit 'out of shot' if they wish.

## **So what does all this mean for you?**

First and foremost, it means that we are doing all we can to keep your information safe. If you think any information is out of date, or simply *wrong*, then please let us know and we will put it right as soon as we can. When personal data is no longer required it is disposed of securely. And, as with any organisation, you have a right to ask for a copy of the information we hold.



We are entitled to pass on your information to certain people within the Church – but only if they have a genuine 'need to know'. So, for example, District Elders are told which members live in their District, organisation leaders know who is in their organisation, and membership lists are given to the Ministers and West Lothian Presbytery. Certain types of information might also be accessible to the people who look after our computer and personnel systems. However, we need your permission if we wish to use your contact details or photo where it could be seen by

anyone outside the Church or, in group photos, give you the opportunity not to appear.

More information is contained in our data protection policy and privacy notice, both of which are available on the St Michael's website. If you have any further questions then please feel free to contact me:

email: [dataprotection@stmichaels-parish.org.uk](mailto:dataprotection@stmichaels-parish.org.uk)

I hope this assures you that we are doing all we can to look after your personal data properly and that you can, indeed, 'put your trust in the Church'.



# SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH

*by Margaret Henderson*



The Annual General Meeting of the Society for 2018 was slightly different as it was held in the Kirk Hall and, afterwards, those present enjoyed a two-course meal. This gave the members an opportunity to enjoy fellowship and to discuss further some of the items raised earlier.

Although there was a feeling that this had been a 'quiet' year for the Society, Vice-chairman, Ken MacKenzie, commented on the amount of work that had gone into 'Lest we Forget', a major public event in November 2017; it was a truly moving and poignant production.



The committee has met regularly over the year to discuss a number of possible projects:

- signage and information boards/paddles for some of the highlights of a visit to St Michael's;
- a cabinet for the new audio-visual system;
- funding for the essential work required on the upper level stonework of the church building.

The concept of a Society of Friends of St Michael's was conceived during the dark days of World War 2, when the future was far from clear. It was the vision of a few people who looked forward to a time when things would be better and stability would have returned. Today is also a period of change in Britain, Linlithgow and St Michael's but what doesn't change is the building. How important it is to us as a church and to our friends in the wider community!



At present there are 129 members in the Society, but we are not attracting new members. At its last annual meeting, the Society began to think about developing a new vision for the future to lead it forward into the next 75 years. One of the ideas discussed was whether the constitution should be reviewed in terms of how the Society is organised and run. Also raised were ideas for possible future projects for the further adornment of the Church and its surroundings. Instead of an annual outing the committee has been considering other ways of hosting Friends' events. Some of these are:

- A dinner or Cheese & Wine evening with a high-profile speaker;
- A recital;
- Specialist church tours
- A Friends' Corner in the church with a monitor and loop to promote St Michael's.

Most of all, there is a need for new members to replace those who have left and perhaps bring new ideas as to the way ahead. Annual Membership costs £20, £15 for concessions and Life Membership £100. Please give joining careful consideration. This is your opportunity to have a say in the future of our wonderful sanctuary and protect it for future generations. You can contact me by telephone at 01506 844787 for further information.



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# A CHARGE FOR WANDA

*by Pat Brough*

On Sunday mornings a team of 7 or 8 Elders ensures that doors and gates are opened, lights put on, newsletters ready, the screen erected for the first service, with hymn books for use at the second service. Several Elders are on duty at each service to welcome members of St Michael's and also any visitors. Elders are there to help anyone who requires it, answer questions and generally keep things running smoothly – from organising fresh water for the pulpit, warm water for a baptism, to reserving seats at the front for the Sunday Club at 9.30am or for special visitors.

There are 11 teams of Elders, changed monthly, ensuring that no team has to cope with the plethora of services in December too often. If an Elder has to miss a duty, then he or she has to provide a substitute, a friend or a name chosen from the duty rota. This is when they consult the Elders' Yearbook.

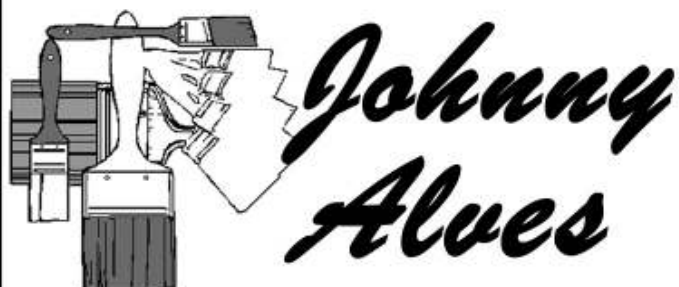


The Yearbook for 2019 will be compiled by Wanda Black, who has been appointed deputy Session Clerk. It is her task to list the information required by every Elder. Every member of Session is listed alphabetically with his/her address, email address and telephone number, together with the District allocated to each. The Sunday morning rota is fairly static and only has to be changed if an Elder resigns or moves outwith the area.

The real challenge comes when Wanda has to allocate Communion duties for nearly a hundred Elders. Eighteen are required to assist at the 11am service, twelve serving Communion and six needed for reserves in case of illness or holidays. Wanda has to ensure that duties are evenly distributed among our Session members; she also tries to have married couples on duty at the same service. Following an early arrival at church, Elders will be allocated their various tasks by Wanda, who will make sure that everything goes smoothly.

The Yearbook includes a plan of the Communion table and a plan of the church, detailing in which area of the church an Elder has to serve the elements. It also contains much information, including Elders' Districts, the various teams with their aims, and in general seeks to assist in the task of helping the clergy to keep everything running efficiently in our large congregation.





# Johnny Alves

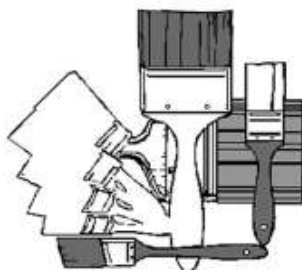
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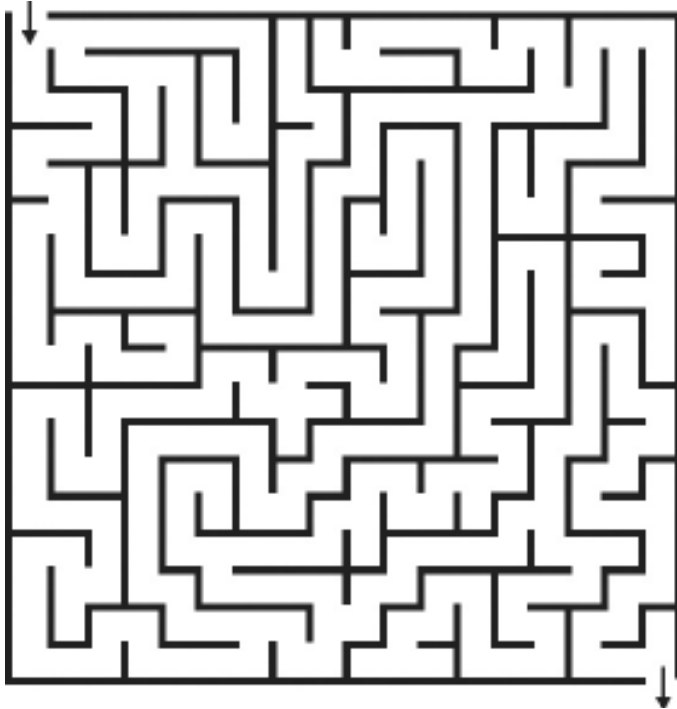


# JOURNEYS



## Following a Star

Help the Wise Men find their way to the right house.



## Escaping Winter

Many animals and birds make long journeys each year to escape the winter's ice and snow and then return home in the spring. Can you unscramble the names of these birds which spend their winters in and around Linlithgow?

cabbrlkdi	larnmigbb
dilreffea	neeelgoyd
teofknopid	osego
wrigdne	late
prowoeh	nsaw
gwanxiw	nogiew



## Answers

blackbird  
brambling  
fieldfare  
goldeneye  
pinkfooted goose  
redwing  
teal  
waxwing  
whooper swan  
widgeon



## Escape to Egypt

Find 10 differences between these 2 pictures of Mary, Joseph and Jesus escaping from Bethlehem to Egypt.







## ***100 years ago***

**22th Jan 1919** The Moderator submitted the report of the Committee which had revised the Communion Roll. The report was approved, and the Roll ordered to be attested. The Committee drew the attention of the Kirk Session to the fact that the Roll at 31 Dec. 1918 was 1194. The Roll contained a number whose attendance at Communion was not satisfactory and it was resolved that certain of these be spoken to by the Elders in their respective districts when next delivering their Communion Cards, and that certain others receive thro' the Clerk a circular letter in terms which were suggested by the Moderator and approved by the Session.

*Copy of the letter referred to in the above minute:-* It is with much regret that the Kirk Session have instructed me to call your attention to the subjoined passage from the Act of Assembly 1896 from which you will see that if you should be absent from the Communion for another year without a sufficient reason being shown, they will have no alternative but to remove your name from the Roll.

*[The passage referred to:-* 'The names who have been absent from the Communion for three consecutive years will be removed from the Roll unless a reason satisfactory to the Kirk Session is assigned or is already known to the Session.']

## ***50 years ago***

**19th Nov. 1968** *[Friends of St. Michael's]* A letter was submitted from Mrs. Wright, Secretary of the Society of Friends of St. Michael's, requesting the Session's views on a proposal of the Society to consider the possible rearrangement and improvement of the furnishings in the area below the Chancel step. The Session noted this proposal with interest and agreed to give consideration thereto on receipt of details of the suggested work. The Session agreed that appreciation be conveyed to the Society for their successful completion of the work to provide safe access to the top of the Church tower.

**21st Jan. 1969** *[Evening Services]* Mr. J.P. Fleming expressed disappointment at the proposal, as contained in the Church Magazine and confirmed by Pulpit intimations, to curtail the Evening Service each Sunday in Church and to have discussions thereafter for approximately one hour in Cross House. The Moderator explained the purpose of the new arrangement, and suggested that it would be appropriate to reconsider the format after a reasonable period.



# 25 years ago

**16th Nov. 1993** [*Communion Cup*] The Moderator introduced the subject of the Communion Cup for discussion. There followed a delivery by the Moderator on the use of the Common Cup, or shared cup, at Communion which is not simply due to tradition but rather has its foundation in scripture. It is a sign of fellowship; that we do not take Communion in isolation. The introduction of the individual cup is attributed to the USA of the late 19th century. Its usage was accepted by the United Free Church which amalgamated with the Church of Scotland in 1929... In response to the Moderator's request for motions, Mrs. Wade proposed the motion to retain the Shared Cup for the normal cycle of Communion services, and was seconded by Mrs. McNie. Mr. Cameron proposed the addendum that, at the short Communion Services or the service at Springfield individual cups be offered, which was seconded by Mrs. Grant. A vote on the addendum was held which resulted in 46 for and 13 against. The matter concluded with the Moderator intimating that he will respond at the December meeting of Session.

**21st Dec.1993** The Moderator intimated his agreement to the Addendum to the motion of 16th Nov. and advised that individual cups will be made available at the short Communion Services in February, May, July and November. It was then left to the Moderator and Session Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.



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# THE LEPERS' SQUINT

by Bruce Jamieson

Ever since I arrived to live in Linlithgow, I have been told that the south-west corner of St Michael's Church had evidence of a lepers' squint. There is an odd ledge in the corner but I doubt it had anything to do with leprosy.

In many churches in England and across Europe I have seen hagioscopes – narrow slits set into the wall of a church, close to the altar, where those not allowed in to witness the ritual raising of the consecrated bread and wine could observe the event from outside.

If St Michael's did possess such a feature why place it as far from the altar as possible? Furthermore, I can see no external sign of an opening in the wall. The stone ledge must have served some purpose, but what I don't know. Did it perhaps shield a remembrance plaque from falling rain? Inside the building, the internal insert was most likely an aumbry not the other side of a lepers' squint.



***A lepers' squint in the wall of St Peter's Church, Kirkbampton, Cumbria***



***The site of the so-called lepers' squint at St Michael's***

Many Scottish towns had a leper hospital and Linlithgow, uniquely in Scotland, also possessed a Lazarite monastery, dedicated to the care of lepers. It had been set up by the Order of Saint Lazarus, a Catholic military order founded by Crusaders. Reference is made to Linlithgow's Lazarite House in a document of the reign of King Alexander II (1214 - 1249), where it is referred to as the 'Fratribus de Sancto Lazaro.' Other accounts call it 'St Magdalene's Hospitium'.

Leprosy did exist in Linlithgow ever since returning Crusaders brought it back from the Holy Land. Records exist of the town authorities passing legislation to control the disease. Lepers were permitted to beg around the town as long as they wore masks and gowns and used a set of clappers to announce their presence. (Not a bell!) Meat condemned in the markets as unfit for human consumption was given to lepers and a stall was set up for them on market days.



***The aumbry on the other side of the so-called 'lepers' squint'***

The establishment probably owned land between the St Magdalene's Distillery



and the Cricket Club, at the foot of the incline called Pilgrim's Hill. Pilgrims leaving the town most probably made a donation to the Lazarite monks before continuing on their journey.

Reference is made to the Linlithgow establishment in Alexander Campbell's 'Journey from Edinburgh Through North Britain' (1802). He states that little remained of St Magdalene's – the building being 'in a state of some dilapidation' even when the Protestant Reformers arrived in 1559.

There is little evidence about how the Linlithgow Lazarites treated leprosy. We know from other records that mercury was used – with disastrous effects. It was not until 1873 that Norwegian doctor, Armauer Hansen, discovered the bacterium which causes the disease.

Medieval 'hospitals' could do little to help – other than offer comfort to the sufferers. The care offered to those suffering from leprosy reflects the ambivalent attitude towards the disease at the time. Some regarded leprosy as a punishment from God and quoted Leviticus Chapter 13, 'They must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, *Unclean, Unclean!* They must live alone, outside the camp.'



**A 15<sup>th</sup>-century print of a leper with his clapper**



**A 14<sup>th</sup>-century 'illumination' showing lepers being blessed by a Bishop**

Diagnosis of the disease was not a precise science and many suffered from other ailments producing similar symptoms to leprosy. Leviticus laid down regulations to be followed if the disease was suspected. 'The priest is to examine any skin blemish, and if the hair in it has turned white, and it appears to be more than skin deep, it is a defiling disease that has broken

out. The priest shall pronounce them unclean.'

This inspection process explains the reference in Luke 17 to Jesus meeting ten lepers:

'They lifted up their voices, and said, "Jesus, Teacher, have mercy on us". And when he saw them, he said unto them, "Go show yourselves unto the priests". And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.'

So, Jesus had shown compassion and healed lepers and this act was taken by many as a sign that they too should show more concern and care for those afflicted. Nevertheless, many lepers were often secluded and forced to live in their own communities. To observe any religious ceremony they had to do so from outside the building – and so 'lepers' squints or lychnoscopes were constructed – but I doubt if St Michael's had one.

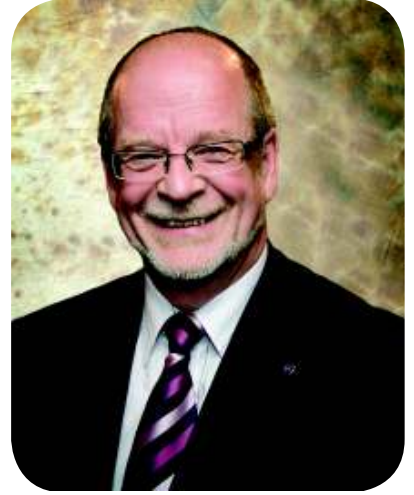


# LOOK FORWARD IN FAITH

*by John Reid*

I guess taking some time out to reflect on our life's experiences can have a sobering effect. The hustle and bustle of daily living often provides us with the reasons for not doing what we know we should.

Reflecting on the year just past, I wonder how many opportunities we were given to serve God better but failed to step up to the mark. I guess we could all beat ourselves up for the things we didn't manage to do, but I invite you to take a moment to celebrate what you have achieved. The little things: the support and encouragement we provide for our families and friends; the times we were grateful for the love and kindness shown to us when we least expected it; God working through you and others reflecting his care for one and all; the happenings in God's world brought into our living rooms via modern technology; the decisions being taken by others on our behalf affecting us in many ways; the changes that we have experienced within our own church.



I wonder if you like me are thinking, who is in control of this mad world, who is providing the answers to all these challenges? Who is to blame, is a common reaction when we are uncertain of what lies ahead and are a little frightened of the unknown. I invite you during your moment of reflection to consider not what others need to do to make things better, but what you can do to make a difference in your life and the lives of others whom you encounter. How can we reflect Jesus better in our day to day living?

Sounds like a rather difficult challenge but remember Jesus is there to provide a helping hand. I love the words found in the hymn Look forward in faith.

Look forward in faith,  
God gives us life each day.  
Go onward with Christ,  
his spirit guides our way  
Now God lets us live  
within the sphere of grace.  
Trust ever in him  
he rules o'er earth and space.

I pray that, like me, you find in these words the comfort of knowing that through Christ all is well.



# USEFUL CONTACTS

## The Ministry

### **Interim Moderator**

Rev John Povey  
tel: (01506) 882495  
email: revjpovey@aol.com

### **Auxiliary Minister**

Rev Thom Riddell  
tel: (01506) 843251

### **Locum Minister**

Rev Colin Johnston  
tel: (01506) 842188

### **Youth & Family Outreach Worker**

Trish Archibald  
tel: 07746828279

### **Church Office**

Val Wood  
Mon, Wed, Thurs: 9am – 1pm  
Tues by appointment  
Fri: 11am to 1pm  
tel: (01506) 842188  
e-mail: info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk

## Office Bearers

### **Session Clerk**

Alan Miller  
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### **Gift Aid Convener**

Andrew Jones  
tel: (01506) 840914

### **Organist & Coordinator of Music**

Matt Edwards  
tel: 07903327159

### **Roll Keeper**

Alan Bennie  
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## Organisations

### **The Guild**

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tel: (01506) 844787

### **Parent and Toddlers**

Margaret Henderson  
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### **Seedlings**

Trish Archibald  
tel: 07746828279

### **Sunday Club Leadership Team**

Alison Mason (Creche 0-3yrs)  
tel: (01506) 848502

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

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

Trish Archibald (YF S3-S6)  
tel: 07746828279

### **Boys' Brigade**

Jamie McIntosh  
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### **Girls' Brigade**

Clare McLay  
tel: (01506) 848250

### **Safeguarding**

Andy Tunncliffe  
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Alison Tunncliffe  
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### **Bereavement Support Group**

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### **Events Co-ordinator**

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## Do You Have Any Old Pairs Of Glasses That You No Longer Wear Or Need?

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