

## **Called to be Christ's body (by Rev. Marc Prowe):**

There is NO point in being church unless church is Christ's body, with Christ the head. **Christ's body does three things:** 1. it prays, 2. it teaches, 3. it serves. Without these, "church" will compete with others (clubs, gatherings, unions, ...) but never be as good, never be able to compete. But all these "others" simply cannot do what church is called to: pray, teach, serve because they do it without Christ as head.

1. **to pray means** to meditate, to think deeply, to ask & listen out for guidance from God (at times through others), to worship, to read God's word as contained in the bible, to think of and pray for others, for the community, to listen for what they say and bring their pleas before God when they themselves cannot or will not, to offer others you'll pray for them, to bless, ...: Sunday worship and prayer meetings *are not the only* means of praying.
2. **to teach means** to explain in down-to-earth words or philosophical terms (depending on who you talk to) the core principles of the Christian faith. It is more than "Sunday School", it is faith courses for youth and adults, speaking their language, it is replying to a question asked (or say you'll find out and be back), it is providing resources in print, on the web, pointing to them, inviting to teaching events, passing on the faith, taking others along with you, creating curiosity, leaving hints (incl. physical hints), to include others in doing tasks, showing openness to questions and critical enquiry, ...: classes *are not the only* means of teaching.
3. **to serve means** to accompany at times of crisis, in grief, being friends, neighbours, feeding hungry people, being hospitable, to care, to heal, to forgive, to set free, to befriend, to accept invitations and be guest, to organise help, to think of and input helpful ideas, to encourage, to go back, to point out the positive, to listen, to accept others help, to include others suggestions, to learn from outsiders, ...: to be strong-for-others *is not the only* means of serving.

All three Jesus himself did when in a physical body between Nazareth and Jerusalem. Now "the body of Christ" (the church), inspired by the Spirit, is called to do these three. No-one else is called in this way. And **everyone has been given a gift** to do at least one of these. **You, too, are called to** be part of this inspired body, to be inspiring. To be salt to the earth, a light on a stand, a refugee on a hill. You need help to do it? Ask, and you'll be answered.

## **Treasurer's report, January 2018**

Thank you to all who contributed to the Christmas Appeal. Over £4,200 was raised which was a significant help in paying for the fabric work completed in the Manse.

£130, from the Watchnight Service retiring offering, was forwarded to Fife Society for the blind. Their letter of thanks noted, "Donations such as yours help us to provide important frontline services for thousands of blind and partially sighted people throughout Fife"

The annual cycle of formal financial reporting is on schedule. Accounts statements have been drafted, presented to Abbotshall Trustees and will be with Harley Hepburn for independent examination by the time you read this. The "bottom line" shows that we started 2017 with over £102K and ended with reduced funds of just over £95K. There are many devils in the detail but, perhaps, the overall feeling should be that year-end could have been a lot worse had it not been for two generous legacies, totalling £12K, and an £8K increase in the valuation of our Alliance Trust shares. 2018 is expected to be financially similar in that the cost of ongoing manse refurbishment will be a dominant factor.

## **Abbotshall Friendship Circle**

At the November meeting we celebrated St Andrew's Day. Morna told us about her childhood growing up in St Andrews and all the changes to the town in recent years. She also highlighted places of interest and customs still carried out. This was very interesting and members shared their memories of St Andrews.

We then had some fun with old Scottish words, some which are still used today and others which made us think. Isobel had a Scottish quiz which was enjoyed by all especially when everyone got the 26 questions correct!!

The afternoon closed with a welcome cup of tea, shortbread and Tunnocks biscuits – all things Scottish!

## HOLY WEEK

**Palm Sunday, 25th March, 11am in Abbotshall Church** – Hymns and Readings for Holy Week

**Monday 26th March, 7pm** - Joint service in West End Congregational Church

**Tuesday 27th March, 7pm** – Joint service in Bennoch Church

**Wednesday 28th March, 7pm** – Joint service in St Bryce Kirk

**Maundy Thursday 29th March, 7pm** – Joint service in Abbotshall Church with communion (also in Auchtertool Kirk)

**Good Friday 30th March**

10am-4pm, Linktown Church open for meditation and prayer with short act of worship at 4pm in church garden

2.30pm, West End Congregational Church Good Friday meditation

7pm - Joint service Linktown Church for Good Friday

**Easter Sunday, 1st April**

6.30am Sunrise service at Auchtertool Kirk Garden followed by breakfast

8.30 Early worship for Easter in Beveridge Park (near fountain)

11am Easter Sunday family service in Abbotshall Church

## LENT

This year you are invited to journey through Lent watching the film 'The Way' together. This will take place on 5 Sunday evenings from 18th February to 18th March inclusive and will take the form of film clips and discussion, with an opportunity to watch the whole film at the end.

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Nowadays it takes a brave person to walk into a church building on their own to start a God conversation with a Christian. This is why **building a culture of invitation**, alongside a culture of welcome and transformation is essential.

Andrew was one of the first two disciples that Jesus called. The first thing he did was to invite his brother Simon. That invitation alone has impacted the world.

***Who will you invite to church with you?***

***Every church service aims to provide rich food-for-the soul.***

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## Ill, in hospital, in times of struggle ... and visited

**Your church "family" cares about you. When you go through tough times, your church family can support you, even just by a visit and chat - if you want that. But do your church friends know?**

Here are practical things **you** can do:

1. Write down who is ill/ in care/ in need;

- write down who has moved in or away;
  - give this note to your elder or the pastoral care team or a minister who will treat it confidentially;
- DO NOT ASSUME YOUR CHURCH FRIENDS KNOW** (we would rather be informed several times than not to know!);

2. You can help yourself - this is how it works:

- Your elder is your first contact, so be in contact!
  - the Pastoral Care Leader is Anne Steward, phone 262988
  - Your locum ministers are just a phone call away (265536).
  - Or make sure your relative/ friend/ neighbour makes contact for you.
  - **Or bring the note below with you to hospital** (e.g. with your toothbrush!):
- .....

*I am a Christian and belong to Abbotshall Church of Scotland. While in the care of the NHS/ your care, I wish to exercise my Human Right as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (article 91) of practising my religion.*

*I request that the Hospital Chaplain be informed of my admission to hospital, and that I receive a visit from the Chaplain. I give explicit consent for information to be made available to the Hospital Chaplain and I would request that this document form part of my current case notes and my Medical Records.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Prayer Group**

We meet in the Vestry on the second and last Sunday in the month for about 15 minutes. A warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join us on any of the dates below:-

11<sup>th</sup> February, 25<sup>th</sup> February, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 29<sup>th</sup> April, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 27<sup>th</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 24<sup>th</sup> June.

If there is someone or something you would like the Prayer Group to pray for, please put a note in the prayer boxes in the Church Vestibule or the Church Hall.

**Anne Gardner - Prayer Promoter - 01592 265876**

## **An Interview with the Nominating Committee**

- Q. How many members are there in the Nominating Committee?
- A. There are thirteen members of Abbotshall consisting of nine elders and four non elders plus the Interim Moderator of the Kirk Session who is an elder in Kinghorn Church.
- Q. Has Kirkcaldy Presbytery been involved?
- A. Yes the current Presbytery plan for Kirkcaldy indicates that Abbotshall should be allowed to call a minister and consequently the Presbytery sent an Advisory Committee to initiate and oversee the vacancy process and provide an Interim Moderator.
- Q. Did the Presbytery Advisory Committee offer any comments about the number of available ministers in the wider church?
- A. We were advised that by 2020 there are likely to be over 200 vacant charges in the Church of Scotland which will be able to call a minister due to their circumstances. Currently there are about 100 vacant charges eligible to call a minister, which can be viewed on the Church of Scotland's website and In addition, there are a large number of vacant charges not allowed to call a minister.
- Q. Why are there so many vacancies?
- A. It appears that the decline in church membership coupled with few new ministers being trained and many ministers reaching retirement has created a dearth of potential applicants for those charges which are still allowed to call a minister.
- Q. How many new ministers are being trained?
- Since last August there have been thirteen reaching the end of their training.

- Q. What has the Nominating Committee been doing about this situation?
- A. As soon as possible the Parish Profile was agreed and placed on the Abbotshall website and informal intimations were made to relevant parties. This was followed by our vacancy being listed by the Church of Scotland and formal contact with all the new ministers completing training. The committee has met nine times with work being conducted by the members between the meetings.
- Q. What else is being done?
- A. An advertisement will appear in the February edition of Life and Work to draw further attention to the vacancy. Work will continue to contact potential candidates and maintain the Parish Profile.
- Q. Is the vacancy process required to be conducted in strict confidentiality?
- A. Almost every aspect of the process is public and can be explored on the Church of Scotland website, the Kirkcaldy Presbytery website, the Abbotshall website and by asking any of the committee members. Potential applicants, however, cannot be discussed particularly if they are seeking a move from an existing charge.
- Q. Does the congregation have any "say" in the acceptance of a new minister?
- A. A candidate identified by the Nominating Committee will be invited to preach as a Sole Nominee and be voted as acceptable by the congregation, however, the candidate may decline any offer having met the congregation.
- Q. How will the Nominating Committee inform the congregation in the future?
- A. There will be announcements of news items as appropriate.

## **BEREAVEMENTS**

We were saddened at the passing of George Birrell, Jim Stevenson formerly a member of Abbotshall, in December 2017.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

We were delighted to welcome into the church four new members to Abbotshall Church during 2017: Thomas and Elsie Sime, Stella Sutherland and Margaret Cranston.

## **MANY THANKS**

This is the first opportunity that I have to thank you all for the support I had at the Christmas Fayre. Many thanks to all who donated to the various stalls.

My appreciation to the people who manned the stalls and the kitchen staff for their diligent work and of course the congregation and friends of Abbotshall who came along and supported the church.

**Thank you all Bill Page**

## **Young Church**

We had a very enjoyable Christmas Disco with our young ones and friends.

Our thanks to Marc and Catriona for their input to the Christingle and Nativity services.

Our numbers may be small but they are a very enthusiastic group. We would be delighted to see your children or grandchildren on a Sunday.

Bring them along and help swell our numbers.

**The Young Church Staff**

## **NEXT NEWSLETTER – SUMMER EDITION 2018**

The close down for the next newsletter will be **Sunday 22 April 2018**. Please send your contributions to Diane Murray on e/mail at [dianemurray953@btinternet.com](mailto:dianemurray953@btinternet.com) or by post to 97 Mellerstain Road, Kirkcaldy KY2 6UD or leave in our basket in the church vestibule.

**THANK YOU – NEWSLETTER TEAM**

## **Flower Rota Members 2018**

Another year, one in which we know there are yet to be more changes. I would like to wish everyone, my committee and all members of the congregation a Happy Healthy 2018. Many thanks for your help in getting flowers and for arranging and delivery each week. Like last year, from January to March we are using plants in church instead of flowers. This avoids the weeks when it can be snowy or there is ice around. The rota will therefore start from **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March**.

Anyone wishing to gift flowers can get in touch with me or any member of my committee. New volunteers for help with arranging or delivery are always welcome. Thank you and we all wish you a "Guid New Year".

Ruth Wright



## **Christian Aid Week**

### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

Christian Aid Week this year is from Sunday 13th to Sunday 20th May. More about this in the next newsletter.

## **Abbotshall Craft Group**

After a busy year in which in total the craft group donated £1564 to the church it resumed on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 10 am in the Kennedy Hall. The group would still like to see more people attend both male and female. If you have a craft hobby or a project you are working on (e.g. modelling, art, sewing, knitting etc.) please bring it along and enjoy fellowship and refreshments.

The group are also holding an open morning again **on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March** in the Kennedy Hall from 10.30am until noon. Come along and see what we have been making and have a chat and some refreshments. There will be items on sale as well.

For further information contact Bett Duncan.

## **Remembrance Day 2017**

The congregation were joined by Beavers, Cubs and Scouts from 86<sup>th</sup> Fife Group who meet weekly in the Church Halls. The young people joined in the service and took part in reading from the Bible and also a prayer, with guidance from the duty elders they then uplifted the offering – their leaders must have been very proud of them.

Before the end of the service we were joined by the Young Church, who as usual had been placing poppies on the war graves in the churchyard. The whole service was very fitting for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and it was good to see the young people taking part.

All the young people joined us for fellowship after the service.

## **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

**Sat. 10th Feb. 10-3pm** 'Your Life in Christ' Conference (Organised by Church of Scotland Dunfermline) in Gillespie Memorial Church, Chapel Street, Dunfermline, KY12 7AW. Open to all. Choose 2 out of 4 **Workshops on 'Studying the Bible', 'Deepening your Devotional Life', 'Developing Meaningful Fellowship', 'Your Prayer Life'**. Take flyer to register. Or email Barbara on e-mail: [b.leppard@btinternet.com](mailto:b.leppard@btinternet.com)

**Wednesday, 28 Feb. 10.45am CHRISTIAN AID [The Gathering - Edinburgh](#) & others:**

Come to Edinburgh and celebrate the work of our partners in Bolivia, and learn how they are transforming lives. Come to Augustine United Church 41 George IV Bridge Edinburgh EH1 1EL or another venue: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved-locally/scotland/events-scotland>

**For P7-S6: Encounter.– Sunday 4 March, 3 to 8pm**, Inchyra Grange Hotel, Grangemouth FIK2 0YB. This popular **prayer event** draws around 200 people from across Central Scotland with its mix of youth-led worship, prayer stations, workshops about prayer, Bible teaching and prayer games. By Scripture Union Scotland. **Booking required:** Costs £5, payable at the door, and includes dinner. Further information: [www.suscotland.org.uk/encounter](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/encounter). To book: [www.suscotland.org.uk/events](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/events)

### **Bridgehead Healing** (formerly Healing Rooms Kirkcaldy)

Drop-ins are **Fridays 1- 2.30pm weekly** at Kirkcaldy venue at **St Bryce Kirk Centre**, and also **monthly** (first Wed. of the month) in our venue at **Rosyth** Baptist Church, 7-8.30pm. Also continuing to offer Deeper Healing **monthly by appointment** in Erskine Church, Burntisland (usually last Thursday of the month 7.30pm). Diane, Andy and volunteers serve to reach our area of Fife with God's love and healing power.

### **MORE DIARY DATES:**

**Saturday 10 February, 10.00am** – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm** - Friendship Circle

**Sunday 4 March, 9.00am and 11.00am** – Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

**Wednesday 7 March, 10.30am** – Craft Group Open Morning

**Saturday 10 March, 10.00am** – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm**- Friendship Circle

**Saturday 14 April, 10.00am** – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm** – Friendship Circle