

ROSIE'S LAST LETTER FROM ABBOTSHALL

February 2017

Dear Friends

Verse 2 of Hymn 694 reads,

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

Sometimes on the journey through life, the pilgrimage of Christian faith, the road takes us somewhere unexpected. For me it's a road to Bowden and Melrose Church in the Scottish Borders. Whilst I'm not quite sure why, I do feel very sure that it is where God wants me to be. It's a call, and having preached as sole nominee and had some time to get to know more of the people and the place, it's a call I have had affirmed. I will be sad to leave Kirkcaldy and Fife but I'm also excited for the future.

Abbotshall will always have a very special place in my heart. It's where, as a student minister, I did my first placement with Bryan Tomlinson (back in 1984!!). I was very young and very nervous but you welcomed me and encouraged me in these early days of ministerial formation. Over 20 years later you welcomed me back as your minister. In these past 12 years of journeying together we've shared joys and sorrows, laughter and tears. I have appreciated your fellowship and your support. You have been open to change and challenge. It has been good being companions on the road.

Abbotshall is richly blessed with committed office bearers and members who work hard in Christ's service. Please pray particularly for your Session Clerk and Depute Clerk, Morag and Morna, in the days ahead. They will carry an added burden of responsibility during the vacancy, as will Andrew and Mike, your Treasurer and Property Convener.

My Service of Induction will be on Thursday 30th March in Melrose. A warm welcome is extended to all.

Yours in Christ

Rosie

Diary Dates

Saturday 11 February, 10.00am – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

Sunday 12 February, 11.00am – Presbytery Pulpit Interchange. Worship at Abbotshall will be conducted by Rev Alan Kimmitt. The minister is going to Leven.

Sunday 12 February, 3.30-5.30pm – Messy Church at Bennochty Church.

Thursday 16 February, 2.00pm – Thursday Fellowship Group meets in the Church Hall.

Wednesday 22 February, 7.30pm – Kirk Session meeting

Thursday 2 March, 2.30pm – Service in Abbotsford Raith Manor

Sunday 5 March, 9.00am and 11.00am – Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Saturday 11 March, 10.00am – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

Sunday 12 March, 3.30-5.30pm – Messy Church at Bennochty Church.

Thursday 16 March, 2.00pm – Thursday Fellowship Group meets in the Church Hall.

Saturday 8 April, 10.00am – Coffee Morning in the Church Hall

Sunday 9 April, 11.00am – Palm Sunday Service

Sunday 9 April, 3.30-5.30pm – Messy Church at Bennochy Church.

Sunday 16 April, 11.00am – Easter Sunday Service

Sunday 23 April – Annual Stated Meeting following 11 am service.

FAREWELL ROSIE

We wish to give you our best wishes for your new charge in Melrose. We hope that you and Dave have a happy time down there.

ABBOTSHALL CHURCH Treasurer's report for January 2017

LET US BUILD A HOUSE

The proceeds of the retiral collections at several Christmas services enabled us to forward £597.92 to the Church of Scotland World Mission Council specifically for the Build a House project in Nepal.

THANK YOU

2016 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

At the time of writing we are in the part of the annual financial cycle where the 2016 accounts have been presented to Abbotshall Trustees. Their approval has been given for accounts to be forwarded to Harley Hepburn for Independent Examination. The Independent Examiner is scheduled to report back to the Trustees in March for their final approval. Printed accounts will be distributed at the Annual Stated meeting and made available on the church website sometime in April.

Subject to outstanding examination and approvals the accounts will show, in summary, an income of £90,508 and expenditure of £89,152 resulting in a modest excess of £1,356 during 2016.

Abbotshall Craft Group

The craft group resumes on Wednesday 8th February at 10 am in the Kennedy Hall. They 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.

For further information contact Bett Duncan.

Thursday Fellowship Group

At our November meeting we welcomed Rev. Elizabeth Cranfield from Methilhaven and Denbeath Church. She told us about the very strong partnership which has been formed with her church and the Church of Scotland in Trinidad. The partnership (or twinning) began in 2008 working together in faith and friendship and supporting each other. Many visits have taken place over the years and a strong bond has been established between Denbeath Primary School and a school in Trinidad. They are able to share their customs, education etc. and the children look forward to visits from their friends in Trinidad. Church of Scotland members in Trinidad organise after school clubs, homework clubs, etc. for the children. In 2013 members of their steel band visited Fife and were invited to play at the General Assembly and also at Heart and Soul in Princes Street Gardens. Elizabeth concluded her most interesting talk by asking us to sing together a hymn – All As One, which is sung to the tune of Auld Lang Syne and was accompanied by the steel band.

A very pleasant afternoon was had at our December meeting when we had a Christmas celebration and afternoon tea. Rosie told us the story of how Silent Night was written nearly 200 years ago and is now a favourite carol worldwide. The story of the Christmas tree and the child's version of how the Innkeeper felt when everyone arrived at his stable. In between the stories favourite carols were sung accompanied by Rosie on her guitar. Afternoon tea followed with all the usual Christmas food and lots of chat, sharing memories of Christmas we had enjoyed in the past.

In January we welcomed Elspeth Smith who told us about a visit she made with the Vine Trust to Tanzania in June last year. The Vine Trust invites interested people to help them with their work in Tanzania and Peru and the task which Elspeth was to help with was build houses for local people. Groups of 10 – 12 people along with many local adults and children commenced digging the foundations and then building the walls up to roof level. All volunteers have to fund themselves and Elspeth was helped by our Rainbows, Brownies and Guides who held a Mad Hatter's Tea Party to help buy various items such as pencils, books, toiletries and toothbrushes which were all received gratefully by the local people. The group visited hospitals and other organisations and also attended a Sunday service held in a church attached to a hospital. They also visited a college where students were taught various trades.

One of the interesting things they saw was an organ which had been built by students and one of the boys played it while they were there.

The group had 4 days to relax and went on safari to a game reserve and on return went to see the house building project which now had the roof on and the ground around it had been cleared. Lake Victoria and Kilimanjaro had been shrouded in mist most of their time but was actually seen on the last day.

Elspeth's lasting memories were how impressed she was by the faith of the people she met – the great support they were always given and despite having very little they were always smiling.

Moderator in fresh plea to end homelessness

Published on 22 January, 2017

Dr Barr at Fresh Start, the Edinburgh-based charity he established in 1999.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has issued a fresh challenge to end the "continuing scandal" of homelessness. Right.

Rev Dr Russell Barr said he believed the country's leaders knew how to tackle the problem but questioned whether they had the will and heart to do it. Speaking at Dunkeld Cathedral on what is

Homelessness Sunday, he said Scotland was at best managing homelessness and had “long lost the ambition” to eradicate it.

In 1999, Dr Barr, minister at Cramond Kirk in Edinburgh, established a charity called Fresh Start which helps people who have been homeless turn a new tenancy into a home of their own. He is using his year as Moderator to highlight what he has called an “obscene” “damning indictment” on modern society.

Scottish Government figures for 2015/16 show 34,662 homeless applications were from households. And 17,822 children and young people under 18 are members of these households – a situation the Moderator described as “shocking and shameful”. Dr Barr said the scale of homelessness is largely hidden but the numbers of people registered today is roughly similar to what it was over 20 years ago.

“I have never been homeless, but since establishing Fresh Start I have glimpsed something of what a dreadful experience it is to be homeless - demoralising, degrading and dehumanising. “One of the lessons I have learned is that for most people the experience of homelessness is a stage in their life, a very difficult stage, but with appropriate support that person is able to pick up the threads and live a more normal life again.

“Another lesson I have learned is that homelessness is not just about bricks and mortar and a roof over someone’s head, it usually involves a break-down in a wider and far more complex network of relationships. “Fundamentally it is about poverty, poverty of circumstances, poverty of education, opportunity and experiences, and especially poverty of good and healthy relationships.”

Dr Barr said he had visited homelessness projects in New York, Toronto, and London as well as throughout Scotland during his term of office so far. “It is evident to me that at best what we are doing in Scotland is managing the situation and we have long lost any ambition to end it,” he added. “I am determined to use my year of office to rekindle that ambition among politicians, civil servants and church members. “I am also persuaded we know what to do to end homelessness in Scotland. “The real question is whether we have the will and heart to do it.”

Dr Barr said giving food and drink to people begging on the streets or sleeping rough is never a fault. But he added that supporting charities like Glasgow’s Lodging House Mission or Edinburgh’s Bethany Christian Trust would make a “real difference” to their lives.

Chalmers Lectures 2017

Feb 1, 8, 15 – 2017

Reforming the Kirk — the future of the Church of Scotland

In this series of three lectures, Glasgow-based Practical Theologian and Kirk Minister, Dr Doug Gay will offer a candid, forthright and bold analysis of the state of the Church of Scotland and the choices facing it.

He will explore what it means to be ‘presbyterian’ in today’s Scotland, in which even kirk members are ambivalent about their identity. Recognising the significant challenges facing the church in the coming decade, he will offer a manifesto for enacting structural reform, including key economic reforms, within the Kirk and will argue that change is essential to address deep seated problems of decline and dysfunction.

LECTURE ONE – Walls Without Church? (Glory without power...)

The first lecture explores 'what just happened?' tracing the decline of the Kirk as a national institution since the 1960s and asking about the spiritual and psychological effects of this on those who have lived through it. It also asks 'what's left?' - exploring what the Presbyterian inheritance means in today's Scotland, in terms of values, ideas and concrete presence on the ground across 1 parishes.

LECTURE TWO – Call and Response (I don't know but I've been told...)

The second lecture explores the relationship between the church's understanding of its own calling and its response in terms of organisation and resources. Arguing that the economics of the Kirk is a key area for spiritual and theological reflection, it questions how resources are raised and allocated for the work of the Church of Scotland. It also looks at the looming deficits in human resources, as numbers of ministerial vacancies continue to increase and asks what a missional response to church decline might look like.

LECTURE THREE — Grand Designs (the architecture of reform)

The final lecture makes the case for radical structural reform of the Church of Scotland over the next decade, suggesting that a reformed Kirk should aspire to a creative reinterpretation of reformed identity, rather than hold to a narrowband presbyterianism. It argues that where recent attempts to reform key areas of the Church's life have been unsuccessful, it is because they have failed to address the architecture of the system as a whole. While recognising the limits of what structural reform can achieve, Doug will make the case for a new balance of power and initiative between local, regional and national bodies, arguing that the case for reform should be based on how it will serve the church's mission.

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

www.churchofscotland.org.uk

PRAYER GROUP

We meet in the Vestry on the second and last Sunday in the month at 10.20 am for about 15 minutes.

A warm welcome is extended to all to join us on any of the dates below:-

12th February, 26th February, 12th March, 26th March, 9th April, 30th April, 14th May, 28th May, 11th June and 25th June.

If there is someone or something you would like the group to pray for, please put a note in the prayer boxes in the Church vestibule or the Church hall.

Anne Gardner

Phone. 01592 265876

BEREAVEMENTS

We were saddened at the passing of John Drummond,
Lettice Halley, Catherine (Kay) Christie, Olga Gosling all in December.
Margaret (Wendy) Bell, John Gray in January 2017.

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CONGRATULATIONS

George and Anna McBain celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary (Diamond) in November

Caring for others helps YOU

Looking after your grandchildren, or providing emotional support to others, can help extend your own life by up to five years, according to a recent study.

Grandparents who provide occasional care for their grandchildren live, on average, five years longer than those who do not. And childless people who provide occasional care for others in their social network live on average three years longer.

The study, at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, concluded that a 'moderate level of caregiving involvement does seem to have positive effects on health.'

Breathe deep

Now here's a trick that you probably haven't tried before: next time you forget something, try taking some deep breaths.

It seems that inhaling stimulates our brain, creating electrical activity where emotions, memory and smells are processed. In a recent American study, individuals were able to identify a face two seconds more quickly if they were breathing in through the nose, rather than breathing out.

The study was carried out at Northwestern University in Chicago, and may also explain why we breathe rapidly when afraid. "If you are in a panic state, you spend proportionally more time inhaling. Faster breathing could have a positive impact on brain function and result in faster response times."

Christian Aid Week Fundraising Jamborees - Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh

Saturday 25 February 2017, 1-5pm

Langside Church, 167 Ledard Road, Glasgow, G42 9QU

Saturday 11 March 2017, 10.30am-2.30pm

St Mark's Church, Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen, AB25 1JY

Sunday 2 April 2017, 2-6pm

Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL

Be inspired by, and share your experiences of fundraising with, other Christian Aid supporters. These events are for new, existing and curious supporters alike.

Our Christian Aid Week Fundraising Jamborees are your chance to hear what other churches are doing for Christian Aid Week.

Whether you're a Christian Aid Week regular or a new volunteer, we're hoping that you will come along and tell your fundraising stories, and pick up some new and exciting ideas too.

Forth Bridge Cross

Forth Road Bridge

Saturday 22 April 2017, 2pm start

An old favourite with a new view! Join us as we raise money and admire the new Queensferry Crossing.

NEXT NEWSLETTER – SUMMER EDITION 2017

The close down for the next newsletter will be **Sunday 23 April 2017**. Please send your contributions to Diane Murray on e/mail at 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