

**Kirkcaldy Foodbank update by our locum minister Marc Prowe (board member at Kirkcaldy Foodbank):**

*Since January, 57% of our clients have only visited the Foodbank once, and nearly 90% of our clients have visited 5 times or less. Fifty-two (4.5%) of our clients have visited more than 10 times since January. That number of oft-repeaters is small. Our foodbank is “being the neighbour” when someone is in dire straits, for a short while, and then mostly lives move on. Some come back to help.*

*Our volunteers who meet and help face-to-face can tell many harrowing stories they hear. These are genuine. Benefit fraud in Britain is at a record historic low, yet those in need typically come bent by shame and fear of blame. I hate blame, but even in that there is inequality. When I open the bible I read different recipes for recovery: **Isaiah 58: 9** When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond. If you put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt, and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well.*

*I see hope in possible future partnerships with Greener Kirkcaldy to strengthen the dignity and social enjoyment of food and to re-connect with the growing, harvesting and cooking of fresh produce. I see hope in a new steering group on food insecurity in Fife, set up by the new joint Council leadership, to progress work around food insecurity (as part of the Fairer Fife Action Plan) and to support the work of the new Menu for Change project in Fife. Regular updates will be posted on [www.healthyfife.net](http://www.healthyfife.net).*

*I see hope in the genuine compassion of our local politicians of all parties which I had the joy to meet in June in Holyrood and locally. We are blessed to have the support of many local people and politicians. I see hope in the tremendous generosity of the people of Fife and the deep faithfulness of our volunteers and board members. There will be better times, but meanwhile many members of our communities feel their heart break when they run out of all means and are faced with very difficult choices. I pray for “welfare” to come to mean exactly that once more, soon. I pray for taxation that moderates the gap between poor and rich, and for a benefit system that sees the person before the statistic.*

Marc

**Abbotshall Friendship Circle**

At our meeting in September we had a “hands-on” afternoon when we covered shoe boxes in bright paper in preparation for the Blythswood Appeal. These boxes were made available to members of the congregation to fill and return to the church. The afternoon was finished with a welcome cup of tea.

In October we welcomed Elaine from Barking Mad in Fife. Elaine told us what Barking Mad does which is an alternative to kennels by providing a dog sitting service and arranges holidays for dogs when their owners need to go away. They have a list of host families who care for the dogs and Elaine outlined how the dogs are transported and she told us of all the fun people have with their holiday pets.

Our last meeting for 2017 will be on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November when we will be celebrating St Andrews Day.

The programme to date:

<b>Wednesday 25th October</b>	Elaine from Barking Mad, Hosting a dog while its owner is on holiday.
<b>Wednesday 29th November</b>	St Andrews Day event including an easy quiz.
<b>Wednesday 31st January</b>	Robin McAlpine on his visit to .Malawi
<b>Wednesday 25th February</b>	Chris Beattie on KART, Kirkcaldy – his work with youngsters in schools and churches in Fife.
<b>Wednesday 28th March</b>	Hot Cross Bun afternoon
<b>Wednesday 25th April</b>	Talk from the Ecology Centre, Kinghorn
<b>Wednesday 30th May</b>	Still to be confirmed.
<b>Wednesday 27th June</b>	Outing to Ecology Centre,

### **Property Update by Michael Petrie Property Convener**

Most of you will be aware that as part of preparing for a new minister to join us in our Christian mission we, as a congregation, are required to prepare the manse for them. This involves ensuring that the urgent and essential repairs highlighted in the 2015 Quinquennial Inspection and any items highlighted during the Presbytery Inspection earlier this year are satisfactorily carried out before a new minister is permitted to inhabit the Manse. The Manse will be further inspected by a Presbytery team prior to a new minister joining us.

Over the past few months work has been ongoing at the Manse. This has included to date the installation of a new more efficient gas boiler, installation of heat, smoke and CO detectors, removal of old gas fires and preparation for replacing them with efficient electric heaters to provide an alternative heat source, replacing unsafe glazing in vestibule doors with safety glass, arranging for an Energy Performance certificate for the Manse, window refurbishment to provide draught proofed openable windows, the start of redecoration throughout. Externally the drive has been repaired, gardens maintained and the rear lawn renovated, slating and flashing repairs as well as repointing of the skews has been completed. This work, along with items which cannot be completed until a new minister is appointed, was budgeted at £31000. As work progressed additional repairs became evident. These were repairs to the flashings and valley gutters to the rear dormer, replacement of a cracked downpipe, additional repairs to the gables and skews over and above that already budgeted for. These additional repairs came to an extra £2780.

While preparing to complete repointing to the east gable of the manse it became evident that the east chimney stack was in a far worse condition than had been able to be assessed from ground level. Damage to the coping stones was far more extensive than was first noticed and repointing requirements are also far more extensive. The Management Group and the Board met and have instructed me to obtain urgent costs for the full repair. I am progressing with this as I write. However, this will add more cost to the works. As a rough estimate the total cost of the entire works could rise to approximately £41000.

As you can appreciate with a building constructed way back in 1895 these types of repair become necessary due to the age of the property and it is incumbent upon us as a congregation to provide a manse that meets all of the requirements for a Church of Scotland minister and their family.

Our treasurer will now explain what this means for us and our future finances.

## **Finance update by Andrew Duncan Treasurer**

The cost of work to be carried out on the manse is a major financial consideration that demands our immediate attention and reaction. But there are others.

In recent months we were left two legacies: £5,000 from Nan Dow and £7,283 from Olga Gosling. I suggest that, as a mark of gratitude, we look for ways to follow the example of the ladies' generosity.

Despite the legacies, largely due to manse costs, we are still likely to end 2017 with a deficit of over £50,000. The other factor determining the scale of the deficit is the decrease in our income.

Weekly Freewill Offering envelopes are a major source of our income. In the 52 weeks to 31/12/16 they brought in £37,981 (£730 per week). In the 52 weeks to 29/10/17, the total had fallen to £34,886 (£671 per week).

The Congregational Board commend specific schemes to improve our income and reduce our deficit:

- Catch up or increase donations through the regular weekly envelopes;
- Support the forthcoming Christmas Fayre on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> November;
- Donate through our traditional Christmas Appeal envelope (marked this year for Manse Work) which accompanies your Newsletter magazine.

The overall financial aim is not just to reduce the deficit for this calendar year but to demonstrate that we are a congregation who are worthy of the privilege of being allowed to call a new minister, without restriction, and are capable and willing to sustain a full-time ministry at Abbotshall in the years to come.

## **Together We Pray – The Church of Scotland**

*Together We Pray* is a national prayer initiative, running from September 2017 to May 2018, calling the Church to come together in prayer. This year, the General Assembly asked the Church to focus on praying for God to renew us and particularly to pray as we think about priorities for the future.

The call to prayer grew out of last year's *On the Road* initiative when meetings were held around the country to listen to the hopes and concerns of church members and to explore the challenges of ministry and discipleship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Throughout the year, we will support efforts through preparing prayer resources (that will be available online over the course of the initiative) and highlighting opportunities to pray for the future work of the Church. In particular, there will be a **National Day of Prayer on November 25** which we hope you will want to be involved. We encourage you to meet on this day in a small group, as a congregation or even as a Presbytery.

Alongside the National Day of Prayer, look out for the brand new How we Pray series, On the Road events, the Prayer Diary, Advent and more throughout the year. Find out more at [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/togetherwepray](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/togetherwepray).

*Sally Bonnar (Convener of the Council of Assembly) and Martin Scott (Secretary to the Council of Assembly)*



## **Abbotshall & Bennochty Messy Church**

### **Sunday, December 10 at 3:30pm at Bennochty Church**

Join us in Bennochty Church Halls for this Messy Church Christmas event from 3.30 – 5.30pm. Everyone of all ages is welcome to come along and join in with the fun and activities. There will be a time for worship, crafts, games, messy play and refreshments of sandwiches and snacks. Everyone is welcome. However, children must be accompanied with an adult.

### **Prayer Group**

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

26<sup>th</sup> November, 10<sup>th</sup> December, 17<sup>th</sup> December, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 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.

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**

## **AUTUMN 2017 ADVENTURES OF THE HOLY STROLLERS**

On **16<sup>th</sup> September** 4 Holy Strollers (Jenny, Jill, Margaret and Morna) were blessed with a lovely sunny day for their walk in **Gartmorn Dam Country Park**. Situated at the southern foot of the scenic Ochil Hills lies Gartmorn Dam which is Scotland's oldest artificial reservoir built in 1713 by the local landowner to power water pumps at the Sauchie colliery as well as a number of local mills. We started the walk at the visitor centre and followed the waterside path round the western edge of the reservoir. We deviated from the path to take an upward route through the community woodland. A canine cross-country race was in progress so we had to have several short stops to give the contestants the right of way. CaniX (pronounced 'cani-cross') is a new fitness craze, already hugely popular in America and Europe, and is fast gaining popularity in Britain. A harness is strapped around the handler and attached to the dog and both run at speed. It was fun to watch them especially as the handlers varied in age and size and the dogs were all types of breed! After we left the race behind we came out of the woodland to enter a newly planted area from where we had good views of the reservoir as we walked downhill on a rough grassy path to return to the waterside. The ruins of Sherrifyard's colliery could be seen amongst the trees. Coal was once big business in this area, and the nearby port of Alloa meant it could be easily transported to markets along the north east coast and on the continent. We continued along the main path past the barns and farmhouse of Sherrifyards. We took a short detour up a slope to a seat which gave us good views over the water whilst we ate our picnic lunch. It was a pleasant walk from here back to the visitor centre and car park. There were numerous swans, coots and ducks to be seen in the water. We stopped at Muircot Farm Shop on the outskirts of Coalsnaughton for refreshments and to browse round the retail area.

On **21<sup>st</sup> October** 4 Holy Strollers (Anne, Jenny, Margaret and Morna) had a walk in **Blairadam Forest**. The notable Scottish architect William Adam bought the estate of Blair Crambeth in 1733, built Blairadam House there and began planting trees both for ornamentation and for commercial timber. Sir Walter Scott was a frequent visitor to Blairadam House in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Coal mining was first recorded at Blairadam by Dunfermline monks in 1291. William Adam bought the estate with the intention of exploiting the coal seams. As the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries developed, coal

became an important local industry and at its peak Kelty had ten pits. Remnants of some of these busy workplaces can be found within the forest. There are several waymarked routes through the forest and we started our walk on the Blairenbathie mine trail. This route passes by the remains of the two Blairenbathie pits. It was a gradual uphill climb at the start which passed by the Kiery Craigs. Sir Walter Scott describes the Kiery Craigs in his novel 'The Abbot' as a romantic dell, where those that visit 'desire to remain long and return soon'. Soon after we passed the remains of the Blairenbathie Colliery and then the track took us over Pieries Burn Bridge and Lochornie Burn Bridge with its tall narrow arch, characteristic of the Adam style. The next part of the footpath was on a dismantled railway line and passed by the remains of the Blairenbathie Drift Mine which opened in 1945 and closed in 1962. We extended the walk by going through the mixed woodland of Keltyhill Glen. As this was our last walk of the season we had not taken a picnic lunch but went to Baxters Restaurant for lunch.

Jenny McLeod

### **Diamond Wedding Anniversary of former Abbotshall Boys Brigade Member**

Allan and Johan (Nan) Clark, now living at Hesketh Bank, Lancs, celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in August. They were married in Abbotshall Church on 17th August 1957 by the Rev. A. Renshaw Mackay, locum minister while Rev. W. Cooper was on holiday. Allan is the brother of Brian Clark who lives at Auchtertool. Allan and Nan also became octogenarians earlier in the year and celebrated these occasions at a hotel near to their home with their family of three daughters and six grandchildren. Sadly their son Kenneth passed away a few years ago.

Allan was very supportive of Abbotshall Boys' Brigade and served on the staff with Rankin Grimshaw, George Robertson, Jock Brown, Alex Mc Donald, Alex & Willy Davidson, Eddy Speed, Bob Bell and Johnny Urquhart until his work took him away from Kirkcaldy. (Ref. the photograph of No.5 Abbotshall Platoon in 'The Boys' Brigade in Kirkcaldy by P. K. Livingstone in May 1953)

Another celebration for Allan and Nan is that three years ago the village where they live started a 'Best Kept Garden Award' scheme and they won the award the first year. The second year Nan had a knee replacement and they could only achieve second place but this year they have been awarded first prize again.

Abbotshall Church sends congratulations to Allan and Nan.

### **YOUNG CHURCH CHRISTMAS DISCO**

As in previous years our Young Church are holding their popular Christmas Disco on Saturday 23rd of December from 3pm to 5pm.

Children and grandchildren of members are welcome.

Please inform any of the young church staff Suzanne, Diane or myself or uplift a leaflet from the vestibule in the church. This is so we are able to cater for the buffet.

There is no charge for this function.

We then proceed to the church for the Christingle service.

Bill Page

### **BEREAVEMENTS**

We were saddened at the passing Francis (Frank) Nuthall in September; Eva Peters in November.

### **WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

Sheila & Robert McKeown celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in August.

## **MARRIAGE – CONGRATULATIONS**

On Saturday 16 September – Andrew Hill and Kelly Ritchie married in Abbotshall

### **THANK YOU**

Just to say thank you very much for the kind thoughts and prayers during Frank's illness, which were very much appreciated.

Thank you also for the flowers and cards from friends at Abbotshall, they were an enormous comfort.

**Patricia Nuthall**

### **THANK YOU**

I would like to thank everyone who sent cards when I was in hospital for an operation on my spine. Also thank you for the flowers and prayer shawl after I got home.

The lovely orchid was a surprise to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in August.

Thank you very much

**Rob and Sheila McKeown**

### **THANK YOU**

I would like to thank you all for the lovely flowers that you gave to my husband David to bring home to me on Sunday 22 October. They were a very unexpected surprise. Thank you for your kindness.

**Irene Deas**



### **CHRISTMAS FAYRE**



The date this year is **Saturday 25th November.**

All the usual stalls, home baking, jams, confectionery, tombola, craft, greeting cards, cosmetics, bric a brac, water or wine and raffles, all will be there.

### **WE HOPE YOU WILL BE TOO.**

All donations and enquires please to Bill Page on 262009.

Tickets on sale at **£2.50.**

**Please note that the hall will be open on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November between 2pm to 7pm to receive donations for the stalls.**

Please note the next coffee morning will be on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

**Thank You Bill Page**

### **Christmas Services**

This year the services are as follows:

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 5pm Christingle Service

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December at 11am Family Service

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December at 11.15pm Watchnight Service

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am Joint Christmas Day Service in Linktown Church

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December at 11am Joint Service for the four Town Centre Churches in Abbotshall Church

## **Blythwood Shoebox Appeal**

Over 400 filled shoeboxes from churches and schools were brought to Templehall Church on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November for the Blythwood Shoebox dedication service.

## **Next Newsletter – Lent and Easter Edition 2018**

The closedown for the next newsletter will be Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2018. Please send your contributions to Diane Murray on email 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