

LETTER FROM CATRIONA MORRISON LOCUM MINISTER

Last Sunday in church we read the story of Jeremiah and the potter. Jeremiah was a very practical prophet and he kept being given tasks to do by God which then led to insights of what he should be saying to the people.

On this occasion he was told to go and visit the local potter and Jeremiah stood and watched as the potter would take a perfectly decent pot he'd been making off the wheel and then mash together the clay once more because the potter wasn't satisfied with the product he had made.

It maybe looked perfectly good to the untrained eye, but the master craftsman was not satisfied. Each pot had to be as good as it possibly could be.

And on Sunday in church there were girls who made lovely things out of plasticine. At first they were quite simple, but then they mashed them up and made even more beautiful creations out of the originals. I hope we'll get photos of them for the website.

How beautiful could you be for God? How beautiful could our church, our congregation be for God? Does it seem fine at a first glance with no need for major change, but maybe what God has planned for Abbotshall is something far finer, far more beautiful, and far more effective than we have yet conceived?

A time between ministers is a good time for reassessing where the church should be going and what it should look like. And the question is less whether the church needs to change than where and how does the church need to change? I can't imagine that there are any congregations that aren't needing the transformation of the potter but vacancy requires a congregation to think about itself and to look at future direction.

And for Abbotshall that means not just leaving a few to bear the burden of caring for and developing the congregation, but everyone seeing what they can do to contribute. The church has many members. How beautiful can you be for God? How do we reshape the church to be the best it can be?

The potter with his clay and the girls with their plasticine had to squeeze and prod and tease out what was before into the new creation. For Jeremiah it was the symbolism of what God does with the people. We can try to resist or we can contribute. In Abbotshall we'd like everyone to be a part of how God's church is going to be.

Treasurer's report August 2017

Our finances are under considerable strain.

Earlier this year we published a budget which indicated that we might expect a deficit of over £22,000. The initial result of our vacancy had little or no effect on Ministry and Mission related payments. However, a review of our Manse fabric required us to revise the budget which now indicates that this year's deficit may well be over £55,000. This is hardly surprising given the age and size of our properties we have to maintain.

At the time of writing, we have spent £20,762 more than our income since 1 January 2017. Here are some of the larger bills we have already paid:-

Church roof repairs	1,632
Church boiler room lintel replacement	1,725
Church choir room roof repair	3,930
Hall roof repair	630
Manse boiler replacement	2,790
Manse drive resurfacing	4,619
Manse window frame repair	495

Fortunately, we do have reserves on which to draw but, at the moment, they could well be reduced by half at year end.

Communion

After discussion with Session members it was decided that, at the next Communion in November, we would ask all the congregation to sit in the central part of the Church. This is so that the Elders can carry out the distribution of the Elements in a more efficient manner than has been possible of late and it also means we do not have to have so many Elders on duty. I hope you understand that this will make our task easier and it will perhaps lead to a greater feeling of fellowship, such as we experience at joint services.

Morag Michael, Session Clerk

Craft Group

A big thank you to those who attended our second craft group Open Day on 5th July raising £263. As well as a tombola, several craft items and greeting cards, produced by the group, were sold. Tea, coffee and home baking was on offer, and the result was a very pleasant sociable event. Since interest was expressed in further Open Days, we shall consider holding more events next year.

Anyone interested in crafts or even a cup of tea/coffee and a chat, our group meets every Wednesday at 10 am in the Kennedy Hall.

Bett Duncan , Abbotshall Craft Group

Prayer Group

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

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

10th September, 24th September, 8th October, 29th October, 12th November, 26th November, 10th December, 17th December.

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

SUMMER 2017 - EXPLOITS OF THE HOLY STROLLERS



On **20th May** 6 Holy Strollers, Anne, Jane, Jenny, Jill, Margaret and Stella, walked along a section of the John Muir Way between Abercorn and South Queensferry. We parked at Abercorn Church and followed a winding path downhill through the woods to reach a stone wall surrounding Hopetoun House. We followed the track which skirted the property until we came

to a gate which gave us access to the estate. It was a pleasant walk across the grassy Deer Park from where we had good views of the impressive stately home. We joined a tarmac drive and had a lovely view of the colourful walled garden. We left the estate and took the minor road into South Queensferry, stopping under the approach road to the new Queensferry Crossing to study its amazing construction. Looking across the Forth the new aircraft carrier was visible at Rosyth Dockyard. We had a picnic stop at a playpark on the outskirts of South Queensferry. We walked through the town as far as the Hawes Inn and as on previous occasions were impressed with the engineering of the other 2 bridges. We returned to Abercorn by the same route by which time the rain which had been forecast arrived and the dry but dull day turned into a heavy downpour. We went to New Hopetoun Garden Centre for welcome refreshments before returning home.

On **17th June** 4 Holy Strollers, Anne, Jenny, Margaret and Morna, had a very pleasant circular walk between Dollar and Tillicoultry. We set off from the east end of Dollar by the Clock beside the Dollar Burn and headed up to the Golf Clubhouse and then along Back Road passing Dollar Academy and their playing fields. On leaving the town the route continued along good footpaths passing Harviestoun Home Farm until we reached the outskirts of Tillicoultry. We crossed the busy A91 to join the Devon Way footpath to return to Dollar. This is now part of the Hillfoots Diamond Jubilee Way which passes through the Hillfoots villages of Blairlogie, Menstrie, Alva, Tillicoultry, Dollar and Muckart. The route is based on the old King's Highway which is mentioned in charters for Cambuskenneth Abbey that date to the 1300s.

It is thought that the route was used for royal progresses between Stirling Castle and Falkland Palace in the 16th century. Alongside the Devon Way is Tait's Tomb which is the burial ground of

several generations of the Tait family of Harviestoun, beginning with John Tait (1727 – 1800), a wealthy Edinburgh lawyer, who bought the Harviestoun estate in 1780. The Devon Way footpath is on the dismantled railway line which ran between Alloa and Kinross. We had a stop for lunch beside the River Devon. After lunch we continued walking to Dollar, crossing over the minor road to Lower Sheardale and then through a tree-fringed cutting. All that remains of Dollar Station is an overgrown long platform. At the conclusion of the walk fellowship continued with refreshments at the Café Des Fleurs before our drive back to Kirkcaldy.

On **15th July** 6 Holy Strollers, Anne, Jane, Jill, Jenny, Margaret and Morna, did a circular walk starting in Limekilns and going via Pattiesmuir, Broomhall and Charleston. Limekilns can trace its history back to the 14th century when it served as the main port for Dunfermline and was the northern terminus for a ferry linking it to Bo'ness. The main industries were the exportation of lime, coal and wool. We headed east from the old pier along part of the Fife Coastal Path. We passed by Capernaum Pier and the Forth Cruising Club and then left the shoreline to go inland. We walked up Windylaw Heritage Path which was used as a Coffin Road, where people carried their dead, possibly from as far away as Dunfermline, to Rosyth Church. We crossed over the A985 to Pattiesmuir and up to Douglas Bank Cemetery. We stopped here for a coffee break and then spent some time walking round the war graves. We were saddened to see how young some of the servicemen were when they lost their lives but we were also impressed to see how much care and attention is given to tending this area of the cemetery. On leaving the cemetery the path climbed up by the edge of a wood and over Bellknowes, on to a rutted grassy track and then a

broad farm track. After this we had an easy walk on a tarmac pavement and then back across the A985 to enter the beautiful parkland of Broomhall Estate, home of Lord Elgin. We left Broomhall at its south western gate which led us into the village of Charleston. From 1750 the limekilns industry had moved to Charleston where it continued to operate until 1956. Rain had arrived by this time so we had a seat in a bus shelter to have our picnic lunch. The ruins of the limekilns are protected by the National Trust. After the walk fellowship continued at the Walled Garden Restaurant at Righead Farm near Kincardine.

Abbotshall & Bennochty Messy Church

You may have heard the term Messy Church, but a bit unclear of what it is really about. Let me dispel some of the myths.

Messy Church is a world-wide organization, part of the Bible Reading Fellowship with 3768 Messy Churches registered, which Abbotshall & Bennochty is one of them.

Messy Church aims to help people encounter Jesus and grow in a relationship with him. Messy Church has Christ at its centre. Messy Church isn't your usual church service, and this can sometimes come as a surprise. It is for families to come together in a relaxed environment and engage with one another, along with other families, enjoying a time of worship, crafts, activities and games. The session is finished by us all sitting down to a meal together; of sandwiches, snacks, along with fruit and home-baking. Following Messy Church's values of celebration and hospitality. A time of fellowship with like minded people. A family could be a single person of any age, a traditional family of mum, dad and 2.4 children, single parent and children, grandparents and grandchildren or like at Abbotshall & Bennochty Messy Church, a teenager who brings along 3 or 4 children from different families. Family is a relationship which is developed through love. Anyone and everyone are welcome at Messy Church.

If you are thinking I would like to know more, but don't know if it's for me, come along for a peek, feel free to stay as long as you like, chat with folk over a welcome cuppa and some home-baking. Walk with us in Christ as we go through to another hall to enjoy interactive worship time (this can be quite noisy at times) where everyone leaves elated with a broad smile on their faces. On our return to the larger hall experiments are conducted, make a mess is made as we get creative. There are always a couple of food crafts involved, which are really popular, somehow these don't get kept until the families go home, but disappear into bellies as soon as they are made! An announcement is made for the start of the games – team games where families are mixed up and compete with one another! For some this is a time of reflection and they prefer to visit the prayer area or sit and chat with the new and old friends who they have met at Messy church. After all the hard work running about, we say an interactive Grace and begin to demolish our tea!

Messy church helps families bond with each other and the wider community, it is an opportunity to meet others, share life stories and exchange news of what is going on in the wider community. Messy church is an opportunity for Christians to reach out in a practical way to non-Christians, giving them a space to explore their spirituality and to ask questions. Messy Church is helping people encounter Jesus and grow in relationship with him.

Louisa Turner, Development Worker, Bennochty Parish Church of Scotland, Kirkcaldy

Abbotshall Friendship Circle

At the April meeting we looked at photographs of the Church before and after modernisation. This was interesting especially for those who only know the interior as it is now. A lot of interest was shown and the outcome was that at the May meeting we had more photos to look at showing various happenings over the years – trying to put names to faces and working out dates was good fun. These two meetings were of interest and enjoyable and there was plenty to speak about over our usual cup of tea.

We were pleased to welcome Jill Harris to our June meeting when she told us of her holidays in the Falkland Islands. Her first visit was as a "tourist" doing all the things arranged, but her talk to us was about her second visit to see the wildlife and especially the penguins.

Falkland Islands is one of the world's great penguin capitals and Jill visited 5 of the world's 17 species. The photographs she showed us were awe inspiring and we saw King Penguins, Gentoo, Rockhopper Magellanic and Macaroni. Jill also showed us pictures of birds (and their young) including Fulmars, Petrels and Albatross.

We looked at various items she had purchased and maps showing the colonies she had visited and also read the local newspaper – The Penguin Times!! We enjoyed a most interesting talk.



CHRISTMAS FAYRE



With the days shortening and the nights lengthening our thoughts are with winter approaching, and of course that means that the Christmas Fayre will once again be upon us. 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 the next coffee morning will be on

Saturday 13th January 2018.

Thank You Bill Page

BEREAVEMENTS

We were saddened at the passing of Mrs J Ramsay, Agnes Kennedy in June;

Lucille Thomson, Ian Armstrong, Robert Buchan in July.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Glenn & Bill Bruce celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in July.

NEW MEMBERS

During 2017 we were pleased to welcome into our church family, by certificate: Tom Sime, Elsie Sime and Stella Sutherland.

SINCERE THANKS

A sincere thank you to all who sent cards, messages of sympathy and flowers following Ian's death. Thanks also to all who attended his funeral at the crematorium.

These things were very much appreciated.

Evelyn Armstrong and Family

USED STAMP APPEAL (2017)

Thank you all for the used stamps which you have kindly donated to the church to help raise funds for the World Mission Stamp Appeal. It is through your support that £4,334.00 was raised by The Church of Scotland in 2016 to support the Othara Eco-spirituality centre run by our partner the Church of South India.

This year the appeal is raising money for the Giffen Institute of Theology (GIT) in South Sudan. Our partners, the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan (PCOSS), established GIT in 1974. 75% of PCOSS' ministers are trained at the Institute, and it plays a vital role in educating and equipping

students for ministry. It has, however, suffered as a result of the violence which has erupted in South Sudan over the past few years.

The Institute has been relocated twice in order to ensure the safety of its staff and students. As such, GIT has now re-established in Kakuma, a refugee camp in Kenya. Resources were unfortunately lost in the process, and the library was, very sadly, burnt to the ground. Money raised this year will provide GIT with much needed resources, including books for their library.

Anne Moyes

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Saturday 9 September** – Coffee Morning 10am to noon
- Saturday 16 September** – Abbotshall Walk
- Sunday 17 September** – Harvest Thanksgiving Service at 11am
- Thursday 21 September** – Kirk Session Meeting at 7.30pm
- Wednesday 27 September** – Friendship Circle Meeting at 2pm
- Sunday 1 October** – Messy Church at Bennochty Church from 3.30pm to 5.30pm
- Saturday 14 October** – Coffee Morning – raising funds for Jenny Featherstone, our Mission Partner
- Saturday 21 October** – Abbotshall Walk
- Wednesday 25 October** – Friendship Circle Meeting at 2pm
- Thursday 26 October** – Board Meeting at 7.30pm
- Sunday 5 November**
 - Communion
 - Common Cup at 9am
 - Individual Cup at 11am
- Wednesday 8 November** – Pastoral Care Meeting at 10am
- Sunday 12 November** – Next issue of Newsletter
- Sunday 12 November** – Messy Church at Bennochty Church from 3.30pm to 5.30pm
- Saturday 25 November** – Christmas Fayre 10am to 12 noon
- Wednesday 29 November** – Friendship Circle at 2pm
- Wednesday 29 November** – Kirk Session Meeting at 7.30pm