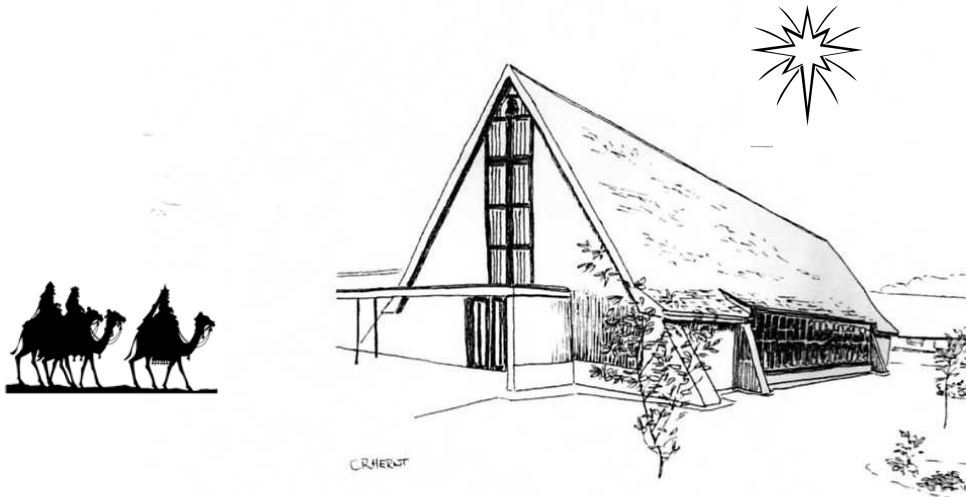


KIRK OF THE HOLY ROOD

KIRK MESSENGER



*MAY YOU ALWAYS BE JOYFUL IN YOUR UNION WITH THE LORD, I SAY IT AGAIN —
REJOICE. (PHILIPPIANS 4 v4)*

DECEMBER 2016

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The Nearly New Shop

After ten years organising the shop, I have decided to hand over to someone else. Allyson Black has agreed to take on the job. My thanks to everyone for their help and support over the years, making the shop a great success.

Elsbeth Irvine

DIARY DATES

Sunday 4th December

Communion

11.00am & 6.15pm

Sunday 11th December

11.00am Gift service (Toys for local children)

7pm - Service for bereaved families

Sunday 18th December

Nativity Service

Sunday School perform the Christmas Story

To Be Confirmed.

Saturday 24th December

Christmas Eve Service

11.15pm

Sunday 25th December

Christmas Day Family Service

11am

Sunday 1st January 2017

Joint New Year's Day Service at
Abbotsgrange Church at 10.30am.

All the local churches together.

**THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE AT
KIRK OF THE HOLY ROOD.**

Women's Association

Let me take you all further forward into our syllabus.

On the 30th November we will hold our St Andrew's Night, The entertainment will be provided by Mr Ian Scott and Friends. £3 per ticket.

Getting ready for Christmas?

On 7th December our guest speaker will be Mrs Linda McCutcheon who designs and makes Christmas Figures. Linda will take us through the process of making and painting the figures. There will be an opportunity to purchase some of the items.

December 14th – Christmas Party at Scott's Bistro, Wood Street. After the meal we can enjoy an evening of dancing and party games. The music will be played by the Alan Corbett Group.

December 21st – Carol Service in the Hall when members of the Association will conduct the worship and praise with readings, hymns and prayers.

The 28th December and 4th January 2017 are holidays.

We come together for our first meeting of 2017 with a Welcome Back night of quizzes and board games.

As I look forward into 2017 we are planning a Jean Armour night in January and I am very excited to tell you on 8th March we will welcome Mr Alastair McDonald who is well known for his singing of Scottish Songs and Religious Music. This will be our fundraiser evening when everyone is invited to enjoy this night of music and song. The event will be held in the church.

You will be warmly welcomed if you would like to come along on a Wednesday evening. We meet from 7.30pm till 9pm unless otherwise intimated.

May I wish all our members, congregation and community Christmas Blessings and Good Health and Friendship in 2017.



Mary Wood, President

(Tel: 01324 870520)

Prayer Promoter KHR

“On a journey!”

I was very pleased to have been given this book of prayers from Jean Scott and had been the late Jim Scott's, so extra cherished.

This is one I would like to share with you?

Heavenly Father, your son Jesus Christ ministered to those who were ill.

Touch....now, that they may know your presence, feel your love and receive your strength.

May the Father's love enfold you; the presence of Christ remain with you: the healing Spirit work within you: that you may be raised up to new health, new wholeness and new holiness.

Amen

Many Blessings

Eleanor Neilson

Prayer Co-ordinator

Community Kitchen



All the 5 churches in the town have come together to hold a Community Kitchen in Kirk of the Holy Rood church hall on a Friday 12 noon to 1 30pm.

This is welcoming everyone who would like a bowl of homemade soup.

Of course a cuppa and a blether is included and there is no charge.

You will receive a warm friendship so please pop in and enjoy this time .

The Volunteers

Gift Aid

This year, from January to September, we have received £6,147.52 in recovered tax.

Anyone who is a taxpayer and has not applied for Gift Aid, see me on a Sunday. All you have to do is sign a declaration form – that's it – no information needed about your finances or personal details.

Under Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, charities can claim on donations up to £20. This means that for members who are not taxpayers, their offerings and donations can be included in claims to HMRC without having to complete a declaration form. This will cover offerings, open plate, small donations and giving day.

If you have a change of circumstances i.e. change of address / name / no longer a taxpayer, please let me know – keeps my records up to date.

Elsbeth Irvine,
Gift Aid Convenor

Parish Register

Weddings:

Jennifer and Paul Scott, 31 Kenmore Drive, Polmont

Anne Walker and Graham Gilmour, 64 Craigleith Road, Grangemouth

Deaths:

Hector MacKenzie, 26 Fullerton Drive, Polmont

Margaret Murray, 33 Morar Court, Grangemouth

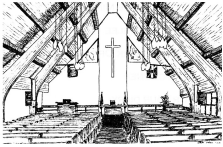
James Russell, 63 Spey Court, Grangemouth

William Duncan, 62 Moriston Court, Grangemouth

Margaret Alexander, 42 Haig Street, Grangemouth

Jessie (Laura) Laird, 62 Kersiebank Avenue, Grangemouth

Minister's Message



“Every November I try to make a space in my diary to attend the Willow Creek World Leadership Summit. This year, as last, it is in Stirling. I did have the privilege of attending the real thing in 2014 in Chicago and it is a very impressive gathering. The number of people there is like a small town (something near 12, 000 people) and the atmosphere is amazing. We are reminded each year of the many clergy who can't attend such an event because of personal financial circumstances, difficulty in travel, and war. And yet, even in these troubled situations stories are told of the church doing great things and the mission of the church being furthered. We hear about churches that are growing in spite of the horrendous conditions they have to endure.

By the time you read this, America will have voted in their next President. I can't remember a campaign that has been as vicious and nasty as this one. Neither person seems to have come out of it with any real glory. Even here in the UK, with all the Brexit machinations, some politicians seem happy with stirring the pot and even adding to the nastiness of what was a very low level standard of debate. All the while, it adds to the uncertainty in the world today, adding to people's worry about the future. And yet, going on in the background, is good work. Often unnoticed, often unrecognised and un-thanked, good things are still happening. The work of Cross Reach for example. The caring arm of the Kirk, looking out for the vulnerable in society, helping those who are struggling. The work of the Food Bank, to which you give so generously, for which I thank you, is helping people make ends meet. The service of ordinary members of the Kirk who are quietly getting on serving Christ in the clubs and associations that need their support. At the core of this is the mission of the Church, to serve Christ and also to tell people about the good news that is the Gospel, that people would learn about Jesus because of what we do in His service. This is mission.

I was challenged by several of the speakers at the conference and I began to think about what the church is doing in mission, or whether the church nationally is simply maintaining itself and even just managing its own decline. It was hard to listen to these people talking of the church that I hold dear, realising that they might be right. Perhaps we need to realign our thinking to be more missional in outlook. Our Outreach Committee serves us well by reminding us, educating us even, of groups that seek to be advocates to the voiceless, assistants where people need some physical help, companions where loneliness looms, and they do this locally, nationally and internationally.

We also need to look at what motivates our spirituality. Are we taking opportunities to charge our spiritual batteries on a daily basis? Are we making sure that we have a few moments each day with our God? Are we expecting our God to show up and answer our prayers? The people in countries where there is conflict and struggle are certainly doing this. Are we in danger of becoming complacent in our walk of faith? These were all questions that challenged me at the conference. Do they offer a similar challenge to you?

Every blessing,

David”

POSITIVE NEWS FROM THE TREASURER!!!!

I thought I'd better start with an eye-catching headline, just to emphasise the positive nature of the Treasurer's report. I'm led to believe there are a few readers who skip over this section for fear of seeing further bad news, or perhaps because it's not very interesting.

Well, this Treasurer's Report will be different (although perhaps it still won't be very interesting!)

Rarely have I had the opportunity to be so positive about the finances of our church, so please forgive my over-enthusiasm. I may have got somewhat carried away!!

Firstly, from a financial perspective, it has been confirmed that we have had significant assistance from a combination of presbytery and "head office". They have reduced the level of contribution towards Ministry & Mission that we are to pay this year by some £12,000 Not only that, but they have also written off our shortfall from past years, which stood at £16,814

In other words, we have effectively been given almost £29,000 to help us along. I think you'll agree this is a phenomenal sum, and one which makes my job significantly easier. This financial assistance may be due to the many letters of appeal we have made over past years, when we disputed the levels of income that were shown on our annual statements (these wrongly included money granted to us so we could upgrade our heating) but regardless, the amount we have been given is way beyond my expectations, and I am immensely grateful to both presbytery and George Street for this.

I'd like to think also, that the assistance offered reflects the attitude we have shown, as a congregation, to struggle on through financial adversity, being as positive as we can, raising what funds we can, and making ends meet as much as possible. Our recent fundraising efforts have been a shot in the arm to the church, not only financially, but also to the levels of fellowship we enjoy, and our engagement with the general public. I can't imagine this has gone un-noticed, and I suspect that this will have been viewed very positively.

All I can say further is – let's keep it going. Let's finish 2016 on a high, and continue it on to 2017. Also, if you have any questions about any aspect of the church finances, please feel free to ask.

Rewiring

The rewiring work has begun and much progress has been made, despite the presence of some difficult obstacles to overcome. Our previous wiring had pretty much disintegrated in places, and this and the fact the there is virtually zero clearance for underground work have added to the complexities of the job to be done. Our contractor has had his hands full, but has been very inventive in finding solutions.

Despite all the financial assistance noted above (the £29000 from Presbytery and George Street), we will still be able to draw on a grant of £10,000 from the trustees at George Street, towards the cost of the rewiring, once we have been invoiced for the work done. This will make the final bill much smaller and easier to manage, and I will keep you all posted as best I can.

Get Wired In

Our fundraising campaign will have been running for a good few months by the time you read this, indeed the rewiring may have been completed and paid for. While this would mean we have to decide on a new purpose for our fundraising efforts, and perhaps a new name, can I urge everybody to continue as this year comes to a close, and a new one begins. Maintaining the levels of enthusiasm and commitment during the fundraising effort, in both planning and execution, will be a big challenge, but our response this year proves what levels we can reach, and that warm glow of achievement and increased levels of friendship and fellowship are not the only rewards we can attain.

The totals raised in the events so far are as follows :

Children's Day drop-in cafe	£261.20
Wimbledon-themed lunch	£649.22
Talbot House Coffee Morning	£487.90

These are fantastic amounts raised, and I would like to thank all who contributed their time or talent to help our cause.

Other fundraising

A further fundraising idea which we have adopted is the use of a website called Easy Fundraising. Basically, by shopping on the internet, exactly as you would normally, but instead navigating via a website associated with Kirk of the Holy Rood, you will raise additional funds for the church at no cost to yourselves, or indeed to the church. Just by shopping via this website means that commission is paid on your purchases, so please consider this is as a further help to our funds.

The website is

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/kirkoftheholyroodgrangemouth/>

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your contributions to Kirk of the Holy Rood, whether it be your time, your talent, or your financial assistance.

If I don't manage to see you before Christmas, may I wish you the very best for Christmas, the festive season, and 2017.

Best Wishes

Stuart Blackwood

Outreach

Many thanks again to all who donated to our Harvest Appeal for Mary's Meals. The total included a generous donation from Grangemouth Community Care from their Fun Day held in the hall in September. The total raised was £817.

We will have bags on the pews if you wish to pop in small coins on the Sundays leading up to Christmas. Tags for the tree will also be available for £1. Your own message – a memory or a prayer – can be added. The income from these sources will go to The Forth Valley Talking Newspaper Association (also known as Newslines) which provides audio versions of The Falkirk Herald each week to blind and visually impaired people in the area. The volunteers also send out (all free of charge) a monthly audio magazine of articles of interest and provide an audio version of The Falkirk Council News.

On Sunday 11th December we will have our annual gift service. Again this year we hope to support the Provost's collection of toys for children of families in the local area who are having a difficult time, so toys and gifts for children of all ages will be gratefully received. The wonderful selection of gifts which we were able to donate last year was much appreciated. After this service we invite you to the hall for a few festive nibbles and the chance to say thank you for all your support over the year.

Also on 11th December we will share with the minister in the annual service for bereaved. This will take place at 7pm. A letter of invitation will be sent to those we know of who have lost a relative or friend in the last year. If you know of someone who would appreciate a letter please let me know. The service is, of course, open to all to share a quiet time of remembrance.

As we reach the end of another year I would like to thank the members of Outreach for their generous support of our various initiatives. Much appreciated!

Betty Sutherland

National Youth Assembly

I recently had the privilege of attending my first ever National Youth Assembly along with Hazel Smith. I was made to feel very welcome and I really enjoyed making new friends from across Scotland. I could tell that a lot of loving effort had gone in to making our jam-packed weekend the best it possibly could be.

As well as being a fun weekend of fellowship, NYA provided me with an interesting insight into what the church is discussing and campaigning for at a local and national level. It was encouraging to see so many young people passionate about sharing the love of God with others through advocating Gender Justice, Mental Health awareness, and developing fresh expressions of ministry and how we 'do' church. As some of you may have heard during our "NYA report", here are the main conclusions which came from our discussions:

- Gender Justice: We can try to reverse the negative effects of gender stereotypes by valuing and including people as best we can, no matter their gender identity.
- Mental Health: We can recognise the stigma often suffered by people with mental health issues, and play our part to offer love and support to people who may be affected, both inside and outside of church.
- Fresh Expressions: We can make an effort to reach out to people in new ways, trusting that God will open up doors for us as we serve Him.

I believe that each of us can make a difference in these areas by choosing to be intentional about loving the people around us as best we can. I don't know what that might look like for you, perhaps it just consists of inviting someone to your house for coffee, calling a friend for a chat, signing up for duty at church or donating items to the local food bank. Personally, I am challenging myself to actively look for opportunities to give and serve as I settle in to a new community abroad. May we be inclusive and welcoming, recognising that there is room for everyone at God's table. We are blessed to be a blessing!

Chloe Blackwood