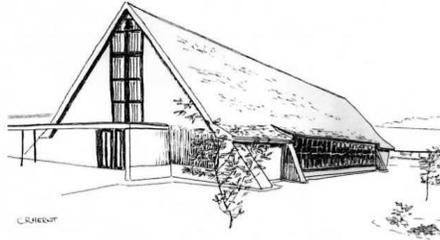


KIRK OF THE HOLY ROOD
KIRK MESSENGER



*MAY YOU ALWAYS BE JOYFUL IN YOUR UNION WITH THE LORD, I SAY IT AGAIN –
REJOICE. (PHILIPPIANS 4 V4)*

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Parish Register

Miss Elizabeth Miller 20 Mackenzie Court

Mrs Elizabeth Dickson (formerly) 4 Douglas Avenue

Mrs Mary Anderson 9 Overton Road



Father we find ourselves so busy trying to make sense of our world that we exhaust ourselves rushing from person to person, book to book, or meeting to meeting, looking for answers.

We feel we are searching for something to cling onto in this hostile time.

Lord we know everything around us is changing and ask for us to be there encouraging one another as you have taught us to do,

We have to move along this road together looking to you for guidance and hope.

Help us Father to cope with the modern world of computers and technology.

Take away the confusion that starts to creep into our minds when we don't understand the ways forward but to talk to others with our concerns.

Father God be with each one of us and strengthen this congregation this day. Amen.

Eleanor Neilson

Prayer Promotor

DIARY DATES

Wednesday 27 February
Children's World Day of Prayer
Kirk of the Holy Rood 2pm



Friday 1 March
World Day of Prayer
Abbotsgrange Church 7pm

Sunday 3rd March
Communion 11am.
Food Bank Sunday

Saturday 16 March
Coffee Morning
Large Hall
10am – 12noon Tickets £3

Tuesday 2nd April
Prize Bingo - Scott's Bistro

Wednesday 17th April
Holy Week Service
Kirk of the Holy Rood 7pm
Other Holy Week Services T.B.A.

Sunday 21st April
Easter Communion 11am



Sunday 2nd June
Communion 11am.
Food Bank Sunday
Giving Day

Sunday 9th June
Pentecost Service
Zetland Church - Led by Raheel Arif



Treasurer's Report

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous 2019. I hope you all enjoyed your festive season.

As Treasurer, my first role of the year tends to be getting the previous year's accounts prepared, and this year is no different. I should have a summary of the accounts printed and available soon, which will be a little easier to follow than the accounts I have to present for audit. If you would like to see either this summary or indeed the full accounts, please let me know. It is a legal requirement that I must make the accounts available to anyone who wishes to see them, and I am also quite happy to answer any questions that you may have about the church finances.

The main headline from 2018 is that we were able to pay our congregational payments in full. Last year was the first time in a while that we had been able to achieve this, and I am delighted to be able to continue this. I am very grateful to everybody who contributed to the financial wellbeing of the church last year, whether through donation, fund-raising or anything else.

There are other items of good news to report from 2018, from a financial perspective. We were able to rent out the manse at the end of the summer, with rental income being deposited in a Fabric account held by the trustees at George Street. These funds will be held for us, but we can draw on them when we have Fabric projects to fund. There will soon be a requirement to replace the upper windows in the large hall, and the rental income can be used towards this cost.

For the coming year, the challenge to balance the books will continue to be a difficult one. Our number continues to fall slightly, in keeping with the trend across most churches, and all denominations. It becomes all the more difficult to maintain our levels of income, despite the generosity of our members and visitors.

Our fundraising efforts this year, as they are every year, are vitally important. If you can help to support our fundraising events (bring as many friends as you can) it will go a long way to securing the long-term future of the church.

There are a variety of fundraising events planned for the coming year, thanks to the hard work, inspiration and infectious enthusiasm of the fund-raising committee. I am optimistic that your support of these events will make a big difference.

Having reviewed the Income and Expenditure from 2018, and compared to 2017, I have attempted to forecast how we will manage to balance the books in the coming year. The impression I get is that we have a reasonable chance of breaking even, should each of the income streams match the levels from 2018. I am hopeful that our members will be as generous as usual with their time and talent, as well as with Offerings, Giving Day, Fund-Raising, etc.

I have listed below the main elements of our income and expenditure for 2018, along with the figures from 2017 for comparison. Where there are significant changes, I have tried to explain the reasons for them.

In closing, may I thank you all for your help in 2018, and I look forward to working together with you all in 2019.

Income	2018	(2017)	
WFO	30,811.60	(30,206.52)	Weekly Freewill Offering- up slightly overall
Fabric Fund	4,100.67	(4,085.32)	Fabric up slightly overall For both of these, well done and thank you!
Open Plate	2,975.80	(2,729.92)	Open Plate up on last year. Having dropped a fair bit in 2017 from 2016 levels, this is an excellent increase, and shows signs of healthier attendances as the year progressed.
Gift Aid Claims	8,188.10	(7,613.97)	An increase of donations allows us to reclaim more tax ☺
Women's Association	1,600.00	(1,600.00)	Another fabulous donation from the Women's Association.
Senior Members	350.00	(0.00)	An excellent donation from the Senior Members.
Mothers & Toddlers	250.00	(0.00)	An excellent donation from the Mothers & Toddlers group
Drop-In club	90.00	(0.00)	An excellent donation from the Drop-In Club.
Miscellaneous Donations		482.51	(886.60)
Hall Lets	3,839.50	(4,866.00)	Down a little, but these are one-offs and always fluctuate
Shop	0	(2,647.80)	Hall Let income remains healthy, although down on last year
Fundraising	4,521.40	(3,329.75)	We were unable to run the shop this year
Giving Day	2,235.10	(2,594.00)	A great effort from all of the fundraising team which made up for not having the shop this year - many thanks!
Many thanks to you all!			Another example of our very generous congregation
Council Tax refund		1,449.00	

Expenditure	2018	(2017)	
Congregation Payments	31,185.42	(32,872.44)	Congregational Payments paid in full
Maintenance	3,190.44	(18,029.24)	There were no major projects to be paid this year.
Minister's Expenses	659.99	(1,844.64)	We are back to "normal" levels for these
Presbytery Dues	770.50	(837.20)	A slight decrease due to declining numbers
Council Tax	0.00	(2,299.92)	No Council Tax to be paid for the manse in 2018
Organist	2,420.00	(2,765.00)	
Cleaners	3,008.87	(2,818.00)	
Electricity	951.02	(842.77)	Due to significant price increase
Gas	3,719.72	(2,713.90)	Due to significant price increase, and some increase in usage.
Insurance	1,928.14	(1,927.90)	
Photocopier	1,448.76	(1,721.02)	A decrease in cost due to better contract terms
Copyright	493.80	(476.26)	
Grass cutting	458.91	(394.42)	
Stationery	587.56	(617.35)	
Window Cleaning	144.00	(216.00)	
Pulpit Supply	377.50	(390.50)	
Janitor	1,137.24	(1,137.24)	
Nominating Committee Expenses	968.91		Our committee are working extremely hard to fill our vacancy. Advertising costs, and sundry expenses are at expected levels. We wish them every success in their endeavors.
Interim Moderator Expenses	262.35		Our interim moderator, Mr Arthur Priestly, gives freely of his time, and will no doubt miss services and other events at his own church in order to be with us. He is entitled to expenses for fulfilling his duties with us at Kirk of the Holy Rood. However, he donates every penny he receives from us in

expenses straight back to us. We can then claim Gift-Aid on the donation, which leaves us even better off financially. May I take this opportunity to thank him for this.

Thank you very much Arthur.

Stuart Blackwood

Treasurer

Fundraising Events



A Prize Bingo will be held on Tuesday 2nd April in Scott's Bistro. Donations of prizes will be greatly appreciated for this event for example towels, toiletries, kitchen ware etc. and bottles of wine and spirits for the raffle. This is always an enjoyable, well attended evening. Watch out for tickets which will be on sale soon on Sundays after the service or at the Women's Association.

The Charity Shop will take place this August and we ask that people save their donations and bring them in from June onwards. **We will not be selling clothes this year.**

Fundraising Committee

Are you cluttered?

In recent weeks hardly a day has gone by without some reference in a newspaper or on television to how housewives can change the look of their home without having to spend money.

They can do this, it is claimed, by de-cluttering their household effects. That, for all of us, doesn't necessarily mean the same thing. For some, whether they be written letters from a bygone age, receipts for your wedding outlays and old photographs to clothes you'll never squeeze into again or wonder just why you bought them in the first place.

In this respect the newspaper columnists and the fashion gurus are behind the times, well behind the times. The book of Ecclesiastes beat them to it.

In this, admittedly occasionally negative and depressing Old Testament offering containing the thoughts of the Philosopher, a man who reflected deeply on how short and contradictory human life is, we can read:

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven (CH 3 v1)"and a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones..." (v 5).

Jesus said it all (St Matthew – Ch 6 v 19-21):

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, whether neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

Unclutter your lives. Trust in Jesus.

Colin, your friend and locum minister.

Outreach

In 2018 you have continued your generous support for our various charities. In the year just gone you donated £1730 to good causes and, not to forget, 12 carloads of food went to the Foodbank. I try to pass on the thanks we receive but can assure you that every penny and every can of soup and carton of juice is accepted with grateful thanks.

Our suggestions for the charities we will support this year have not yet been approved by Session, but I will pass on the information soon.

Betty Sutherland

Women's Association

We are now into the second part of our syllabus and so far we have had only one speaker who has failed to turn up. We have lots to look forward to including our Hospitality night and our Birthday tea.

There are lots of interesting speakers to come and we will finish as usual with our afternoon trip out. There is still time to join us. New members are made very welcome.

Helen Scott President

THE UNEXPECTED

“God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform” are words with which most of us are familiar, words penned by William Cowper, an English poet, hymn-writer and letter-writer. He died more than 200 years ago but his words live on.

They came to me the other week when I was making a tray-bake for a competition at Polmont Rural. Or preparing for it. That's when I decided to have a good look in my store cupboard for what, in my opinion, required to be used up.

What did I find? For starters, the remains of a packets of nuts and fruit, as well as chopped dates, ground almonds, porridge oats, tea biscuits and cocoa. With the addition of margarine and syrup, melted, I put all the foregoing together, covered it with melted chocolate and decorated it with chocolate vermicelli.

Truth to tell it cost nothing given that I had all the bits-and-bobs in the house at the time. But what a surprise I got when I was awarded second prize. The unexpected had happened purely because I had made an effort to take part.

It never ceases to amaze me how things turn out by being simple and uncomplicated.

Jesus reminds us often in Scripture of the easy way to go about making decisions. The obvious is usually staring us in the face – simple and straightforward like my tray-bake, a bit of fun received without much effort.

JESSIE Y.L. MAILER

PS – There is no recipe to pass on so I take no responsibility for failures. JM.

TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT JESUS

How difficult do you find it to get to the truth of anything? Have you ever read reports of a football match in two different papers and wondered whether the reporters have been watching the same game? Or politics? Do you really believe everything you read or everything you hear? How do you know? Who do you believe?

And what about Jesus? We have four different accounts of his life, each of them giving a different slant. Did Jesus claim to be God or Messiah or King, or did others give these titles to him?

What about ourselves? Do we believe the same stories now as we did when we were children or do we now base our beliefs on experience and evidence? Let's see.

* What did you believe about Santa Claus and where babies come from when you were a child?

* Do you believe the same stories now? If not did you feel cheated when you found out that you hadn't been told the truth?

* What were you told about Jesus when you were a child? Were you just expected to believe it?

JESUS WAS HUMAN:

The four writers of the Gospels seem to go out of their way to emphasise that Jesus was human. He was born as a baby of a woman, had a normal childhood, had a normal job, experienced hunger and thirst, weariness and sadness, anger, terror and disappointment. When He was nailed to a cross He bled and died. He sounds just like any one of us!

* How would you describe such a person if he were your friend?

* Why do you think the Gospel writers included such details about Jesus?

* Do you think there is any difficulty believing in such a person?

JESUS WAS EXTRAORDINARY:

It seems, however, that there was more to Jesus than that. His birth had some unusual features, He showed remarkable wisdom at an early age, had supernatural knowledge and considered Himself without sin. He performed miracles, changed lives and saw off His enemies.

* How would you feel about having someone like this as your friend?

* If someone found difficulty with believing in this person what sort of arguments would they be likely to produce?

* Does Jesus now sound more like someone you would like to be?

JESUS CLAIMED DIVINITY:

This is where many people run into difficulty with believing in Jesus. Was He the Son of God, God Himself, the Holy Spirit in some form, just one of these, all or none of these?

Let's ask Jesus himself. He believed that He would judge the world at the end of time, that He should be honoured as much as God, that He gave eternal life, that to see, to know and to hate

Him was to see, to know and to hate God, that He could forgive sin, had been with God in Heaven and that He could hear and answer prayers. He allowed people to worship Him and call Him "God" and claimed that He and the Father were one.

After the Resurrection Jesus claimed that He was present everywhere and would be forever. To the peoples in the ancient world it was quite usual to believe that a god was divine – in fact he couldn't be a god without it! You didn't need to understand it to believe it!

* How would you react if the person sitting next to you claimed that he/she possessed all these qualities?

* What question would you most want to ask?

* Some have suggested that Jesus was really some sort of visitor from space. What do you think?

* If Jesus is God, the Son of God, the Holy Spirit or any combination of all three do you have to be able to understand it in order to believe it?

* What does that mean for us today, in our modern world, in our everyday lives?

* Thomas, after all his doubts, finally accepted Jesus as "My Lord and My God" (John 20: 28) What do you think it would take for you to be able to make the same claim?

* If that has already happened for you would you like to share it with others?

God bless you!

Arthur Priestly

Interim Moderator