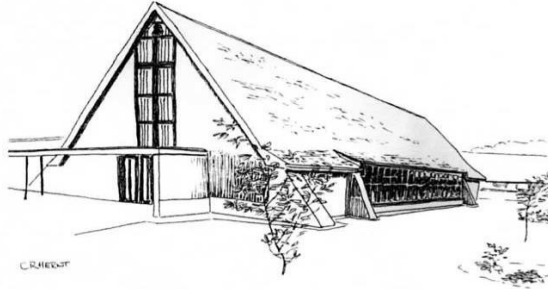


# KIRK OF THE HOLY ROD

## KIRK MESSENGER



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

## SEPTEMBER 2021

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Our Father who is the creator of heaven and earth we give you thanks for who you are our Saviour.

We take this time handing over to you ourselves, family and friends, our minister and his family and ask for compassion to be shared amongst us and support for the people we know that are going through sad times.

Remind us Lord that we have you through prayer, a quiet word and reading our bible to show us the way each day for your Holy Spirit directing your people to do your work here in Grangemouth.

Be with the children and youths over this summer break that many do not go hungry and are neglected through no fault of their own.

We give thanks for the organisations looking out for them and safe places for them to go.

We look forward to more people being able to attend church and remember those who are not able to join us that they are not forgotten.

Father hear our prayer, Amen.

## **Prayer Co-Ordinator Eleanor Neilson**

### **Keeping in Touch**

It has been decided that as restrictions have been reduced to a level where more people are now able to attend Church each Sunday that it is time to return to the quarterly magazine which is delivered to you prior to each Communion.

We are glad that we were able to keep you up to date with KHR throughout the lockdowns with our monthly newsletter and we thank all the elders who took on the challenge of delivering these to their districts, without their help this would not have been possible and it is greatly appreciated. That said we are aware that some members have not felt able to return to Church and we would love to see you all soon but in the meantime please keep looking at the local news section of the Falkirk Herald each week for news of what is happening or check our Facebook page which is Kirk of the Holy Rood – Grangemouth.

**Kathryn Bennie, Editor**

## **Women's Association**

I hope this finds all of our ladies well. I am sure you are waiting for a start date for our meetings. We have decided to try a new approach and have afternoon meetings. I asked for feedback from the ladies and the feeling I get is they would rather come out in the afternoon.

As Abbotsgrange have an afternoon meeting on a Wednesday we have decided to try the Tuesday afternoon from 2-4 pm. Initially we will get everyone together for tea/coffee and biscuits and from there we will take your feelings about what you would like. Do keep in mind that at this moment funds do not allow us to have speakers every week but we may manage to get someone once a month.

Our start date is Tuesday 14th September at 2pm and I look forward to seeing you all then.

**Helen Scott**

## **Harvest Appeal**



Our harvest appeal this year will be in aid of  
Motor Neurone Disease research in Scotland.

The service will be held on  
Sunday 26th September.

## Session Clerk

At the service on 11<sup>th</sup> July myself, Allyson Black and Stuart Blackwood were ordained as Elders having completed our training in Eldership which Ronald guided us through. I am sure like me, Stuart and Allyson are grateful to Ronald for his guidance and encouragement throughout our training. Also, at the service I took the Oath of Session Clerk and it is in that capacity that I am writing this to you. It is an honour to be asked to take on this role and I hope to be able to carry out the duties of Session Clerk as efficiently as those who have held the position before me and I thank Helen, who since standing down from the position, has been very supportive and has assured me of her continued support. I am sure I have a lot to learn but I am confident that KHR members will be understanding as I find my way. Feel free to have chat with me anytime or give me a call if you have anything you think I can help you with. My telephone number is 485292.

Another change that has happened recently is that after many years Betty Sutherland has stepped down from her position as Convenor of the Outreach Committee and we thank her for her dedication to this position over the years. A potential replacement has come forward and hopefully after learning more about the requirements of the convenor they will feel able to able to commit to this.

I wish you all well and hope to see you all in Church soon.

Communion  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September  
11 am



## **Statement from the Grangemouth Ministers and Session Clerks.**

During the pandemic, it has been difficult to communicate with you all as congregations regarding the future of the Church of Scotland in Grangemouth.

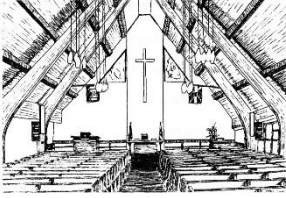
This is just a little note to say that following the General Assembly in May, the Agreed Presbytery Plan for 1 congregation in Grangemouth with 1 minister was sisted (stopped). This does not mean the plan won't happen, but just that it won't happen imminently. The 3 ministers will be working together and aim to draw up a Basis of Team Ministry, which will prepare for the way forward.

The General Assembly in May 2021 passed a new Act called the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, requiring Presbyteries to bring a new plan to Presbytery by Dec 2022. Therefore, although the process has begun, the planned outcome of 1 minister and 1 building will not happen soon - mainly due to all presbytery plans being sisted; all vacancies after Dec 2021 being sisted to allow for more radical plans! Falkirk Presbytery started this task with the agreed plan in 2020. Please do not listen to any rumours you hear.

However, that doesn't mean we stop seeking ways to worship and work together, and so the ministers and session clerks of the 3 congregations have agreed there should be another united meeting on Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>. The venue has still to be decided, depending on covid restrictions.

The ministers and session clerks have been meeting regularly during the pandemic, to discuss how it will be possible to move forward and so we do hope and pray that you, our members, will come along to this meeting, as the future involves you. Before Covid, members of the kirk sessions and congregations met, and so we hope this meeting will bring us all back together.





He calmed the raging storm, and the waves became quiet. (Psalm 107:29)

It is amazing how God speaks to us in new ways through familiar Biblical stories. A few days ago,

I was reading Mark 4:35-41, a story that is familiar to many of us. The story is about Jesus calming the storm. Jesus and his disciples were crossing over to the other side of the sea of Galilee. As they were sailing through the sea, they encountered a fierce storm. A storm that was so violent to the extent that the four fishermen in the boat could see no way out.

Sometimes in life, we go through storms. I am talking about the hard and difficult situations that we experience in life. Situations that break our spirits and moments that shake our confidence in God. Experiencing such situations leaves us wondering if God truly cares for us.

In a way, we can say that our Church is going through a storm, just like many other churches in the land. We are experiencing a season of uncertainty that is shaking our confidence in God. Numbers are declining, and the age profile of our congregation is rising. We do not know what the future of our church will be. This and more can cause us to wonder, does God care for us?

Going through a storm or a moment of crisis in life does not imply that God does not care. Having God in our lives does not mean we are

sailing through life on a boat with no storms. However, it means that we are sailing on a boat that no storm can sink. Storms can come our way, but Jesus cares so much that he will never allow a storm to sink our boat. Jesus can calm every storm.

While it is true that Jesus demonstrates his love and care for us by calming the storms, sometimes he lets the storm rage and calms his people as they go through the storm. While the storm is raging, God carries his people through the storm and gives them peace. The peace of God that reassures their hearts of the goodness of God even in the midst of a storm. A peace that is far beyond human understanding.

(Philippians 4:7)

As the storm of uncertainty is raging in Grangemouth, I can hear God whispering into my ears the words, “PEACE, BE STILL.” Many of our Kirk members are homebound, but I can still hear God saying “Peace, be still.” Some are losing their strength each day that comes, God is still saying “Peace, be still.” The future may not be as clear as we want it to be, but God is saying “Peace, be still.”

I encourage you right now to take your Bible and read Mark 4:35-41; the story in which Jesus calms the storm. As you do that, my prayer is that you may also hear God speaking words of peace. Words that reassure you of the goodness of God even in the midst of the storms that we are experiencing. “Peace, be still.”

*Ronald*

## **Finance**

It has been relatively quiet spell recently at the church, from a financial perspective at least. However, attendances on Sundays can hopefully start to pick up again, should the relaxation of rules and guidelines continue as predicted.

Out with the services, I have received many contributions from members and friends over the past months. I am very grateful for your continuing support of the church, and I appreciate very much the extra effort that people put in. Can I just remind anyone who is writing a cheque, that it be made payable to Kirk of the Holy Rood, and not KHR. I've had a few cheques returned by the bank unpaid, as even though we all know that KHR is an abbreviation of our church name, the bank can be pernickety about such things. I can't imagine that fraudsters would be desperate to pay money into a church account, but I'm not in a position to argue.

Our 2020 accounts were approved by our Kirk Session and are currently being checked over by our auditor. I hope to receive them back over the next few days and submit them to Falkirk Presbytery for attestation. Once that is complete I can send them to George Street, and the Charities Commission (OSCR). It's been a very difficult process this time, but hopefully it'll be completed soon.

Thank you for all your help these past weeks. Make sure you take care of yourselves.

**Stuart Blackwood**  
**Treasurer**