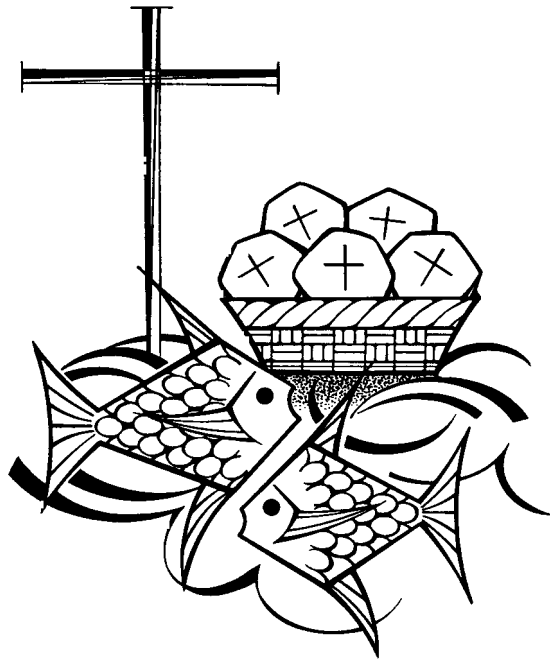


FOCUS

Spring

2016



Kirk and Community News For the Churches in Tinto Parish

Church of Scotland
The Tinto Parishes
(Cairngryffe and Symington with Libberton & Quothquan)
Minister – Rev George C. Shand MA BD
(01899 309400)

Session Clerks:
Cairngryffe – Mrs Mary McLellan, Ledaig, Haghholm Road,
Cleghorn, ML11 7SG (1555 871114)

Symington - Mr Ross Russell
Spindrifft, Main Street, Symington (01899 308240)

Libberton & Quothquan – Mrs Liliias Nicholls
The Larches, Biggar Road, Libberton, Carnwath, ML11 8LX (01555 840572)

SUNDAY SERVICES (see Table)

COMMUNION SERVICES

See table

“Do this in Memory of Me”



Sunday 21st February – ‘The Big Sing’ – Songs of Praise at Symington 7pm

Easter Services

Sunday March 20th Libberton Kirk (elders service)

Monday 21st March Libberton Kirk

Tuesday 22nd March Symington Kirk

Wednesday 23rd Symington Kirk

March

Thursday 24th Cairngryffe Kirk (Communion)

March

Friday 25th March Cairngryffe Kirk (Good Friday)

All Easter evening services are at 7pm.

Joint Office Bearers Meeting – February 29th at Cairngryffe at 7.30 p.m.

Service times for the next few months

| Date | Symington | Cairngryffe | Libberton |
|--|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| Feb 21 st | 0930 M | 1100 M | 1100 O |
| Feb 28 th | 0930 M | 1100 O | 1100 M |
| Mar 6 th | 0930 M COM | 1100 M COM | 1100 O |
| Mar 13 th | 0930 M SAM | 0930 O | 1100 M COM |
| Mar 20 th Palm Sunday | No service | JOINT service all age worship | No service |
| Mar 27 th Easter Sunday | 0930 M | 1100 O | 1100 M |
| April 3 rd | 1100 JOINT | No service | No service |
| April 10 th | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| April 17 th | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| April 24 th | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| May 1 st | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| May 8 th | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| May 15 th | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| May 22 nd | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| May 29 th | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| June 5 th | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| June 12 th | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| June 19 th | 1100 M | 0930 M | 1100 O |
| June 26 th | 1100 O | 0930 M | 1100 M |
| July 3 rd | No service | 1100 M JOINT | No service |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| July 10 th | 1100 M JOINT | No service | No service |
| July 17 th | No service | No service | 1100 M JOINT |
| July 24 th | No service | 1100 M JOINT | No service |
| July 31 st | 0930 M | 1100 M | 1100 O |
| August 7 th | 0930 M | 1100 O | 1100 M |
| August 14 th | 0930 M | 1100 M | 1100 O |

M – Minister O – other arrangements to be made by each Kirk Session. COM – Communion
SAM – Stated Annual Meeting

Prayer & Praise Services

February 15th Cairngryffe
March 21st Libberton
April 18th Symington
May 16th Cairngryffe

All start at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Visit our websites at

www.symingtonkirk.com Webmaster Robert Carson
www.cairngryffekirk.org.uk Webmaster Jim Watt
www.libbertonquothquan.org.uk Webmaster Paul Dobie

MINISTERS LETTER

GOD WITH US.

Looking back to the last issue of Focus, reminds me that my letter then was about our approaching celebrations of Christmas – the season we celebrate ‘God-with-us’. And here, in the next issue, we are beginning our journey through LENT and Easter. If ‘God With Us’ is a snappy title for Christmas, what would we be able to say about LENT and Easter? What is it we learn from our exploration of the scriptures in the annual cycle of our Christian Festivals? What is it we learnt from our focus on the Gospel of Mark, which we began the Sunday after Christmas, and which ends on Easter Day. Again, if we look for a snappy title, we learn from the words and actions of Jesus that ‘God-is-for-us’.

GOD FOR US

In that context, these words of the theologian Grey Pennoyer are very helpful:

‘In Lent we learn that the meaning of life is not dependent upon the fulfilment of our dreams and aspirations. Nor is it lost within our brokenness and self-absorption.

‘Lent and Easter reveal the God who is for us in all of life – for our liberation, for our healing, for our wholeness. Lent and Easter remind us that even in death there can be found resurrection.’

In this issue of Focus you can find examples of how the power of ‘God for us’ influences us to be ‘for’ others.

- Jim Warnock gave a lovely tribute to Jack Meikle at his funeral and we have reprinted an edited version of it. It was always said of Jack that the church was his second home. An

understanding of 'God for us' was a very big part of what made Jack such a faithful servant of his church and community.

- Freda Stobo recounts a story of a very difficult time for one Libberton family, and the wonderful supportive response of the congregation and the local community.
- And on the Hymn Page, we read of Isaac Watts, the hymn-writer, presenting his poetic mediation on how it felt for him, in 1707, to visualise himself standing at the foot of Christ's cross. His words are a gift to each and every one of us. God for us, and our self-offering in return.

With best wishes to you all,
Your minister and friend,
George

SPECIAL EVENTS

A BIG SING - Sunday 21st February – Symington Kirk – 7.00pm

On the evening of 21st February we will have another Tinto Parishes 'Songs of Praise'. The last one we held in Libberton Kirk at Pentecost 2015, and after it we decided to hold a Songs of Praise every 9 months, so we could focus on songs for different seasons. The theme for this one is 'Renewal' – when hopefully we will be beginning to see signs of Spring approaching.

If you have any suggestions for appropriate Hymns, please just let George know.

PALM SUNDAY

This year our Palm Sunday worship will be a JOINT Service, held in Cairngryffe Church at 11am on Sunday March 20th. This is an experiment, to bring all our skills and resources together for All-Age Worship on the theme of 'Palm and Passion'. The service will involve people of all ages in leadership. We hope you will all come along.

PATHWAY TO RENEWAL.

The Tinto Parishes, along with 42 other Churches, is a part of this Church of Scotland programme to help congregations identify ways to become more 'missional'. This programme will last for two years, and begins for us in March this year with an invitation to a conference in Holytown on Saturday 5th March from 10.00 to 4.00. They have offered us up to 12 places at this Conference. It will be very interesting, will explore many of the issues of the modern world that impact on the church, and help us in understanding how we can reach out better to our communities. There will be no commitment to taking things any further. Whether you are or are not an office-bearer, whether you are young or old, if you are interested to attend, or want further information, please do let your Session Clerk know, or speak to George.

SUNDAY WORSHIP.

Our cycle of worship continues with its focus on the Gospel of Mark, which we began immediately after Christmas. To help those who like to know in advance what the scripture readings will be, here is our list of readings up to the end of May.

February 28th: Mark 12:1-12. Parable of the wicked tenants
March 6th: Mark 12:28-44. The Great Commandment,
March 13th: Mark 13: 1-8, 24-37 –call to be watchful

During Holy Week we will also be following the Gospel of Mark

Sunday March 20th: Palm and Passion – Mark 11:1-11,
Monday 21st: Mark 11:12-24 – turning the tables, the fig tree
Tuesday 22nd: Mark 12:13-27 - Questions
Wednesday 23rd: Mark 14:3-11 – anointing and betrayal
Thursday 24th: **Maundy Thursday** (Communion). Mark 14:22-42 – Words of institution,
prayer in Gethsemane
Friday 25th: **Good Friday**. Mark 15:16-39 – crucifixion
Sunday March 27th: Easter Sunday – Mark 16:1-8. Resurrection

Then our focus shifts from the Gospels to the development of the early church.

April 3rd: Acts 1:1-14 – Witnesses, to the ends of the earth
April 10th: Acts 3:1-10 - Healing at the beautiful gate
April 17th: Acts 17:1-9 - Founding the church in Thessalonica (I Thessalonians 1:1-10)
April 24th: Acts 18:1-4 – Founding of the church at Corinth (I Corinthians 1:10-18)
May 1st: I Corinthians 13:1-13 – faith, hope and love abide
May 8th: I Corinthians 15:1-26,51-57 Death swallowed in life
May 15th: Acts 2:1-4 - Pentecost, and I Corinthians 12:1-13 -Gifts of the Spirit
May 22nd: John 10: 1-21 - Good Shepherd Sunday

The new lectionary cycle begins in September. That means we have 15 Sundays in the summer when we can follow specific themes of our own choice, as well as welcoming visiting preachers during the minister's holidays. No themes have yet been selected. (Last year we explored some of the Psalms). **If there is some scripture, theme or issue you would like the Minister to focus on, please do mention it to George at any time.**

On Sunday 11th September we start again in Genesis. This year we spend the Autumn in the Old Testament, in the books of Jonah, Daniel, and Joel before, during Advent, beginning our journey through the Gospel of Luke. This will take us up to the week after Easter Sunday 2017.

Presbytery Report

Both the Clerk, Rev Helen Jamieson, and the Depute Clerk, Rev Bryan Kerr, are still on sick leave. Helen continues to make progress, however Bryan is likely to be off for at least another three months. Please keep both of them in your prayers.

Following the call of Rev Dr Elijah Obinna to Carluke: St. Andrew's in deferred union with Carluke: St. John's (though initially St John's), the congregations of Carnwath and Carstairs have called Rev Maudeen McDougall. The service of induction for Rev Obinna took place on 11th February and that for Rev McDougall will take place on 31st March in Carstairs Church.

The Presbytery will be welcoming back Ann Lyall who is taking up the Interim Ministry in Kirkmuirhill in her capacity as an Interim Deacon. The service of introduction being on 3rd March. Those of us who have been heavily involved with Kirkmuirhill are delighted at this appointment and look forward to Ann moving that congregation forward to the point where they are in the position call a minister following the upheavals there two years ago.

We give thanks for the filling of these vacancies and pray that the remaining vacant charges within the Presbytery may soon be similarly blessed.

Local Church Review Visits (LCRV's) replaced the system of Quinquennial Visitation in 2011 and since then Presbytery have been looking at the best way to carry these out, given that is a much more in-depth process involving a greater level of engagement with the congregation and it's office bearers. Our experience from the two LCRV's we have piloted so far has shown that it requires a considerable time commitment on the part of those carrying out the review and that a degree of experience is helpful. We are looking to set up a team of 12 or so people whose job would be to

carry out LCRV's. By concentrating on this task they could develop a level of experience and expertise and it would also mean that congregations across Presbytery would be being reviewed in a consistent manner.

Due to the shortage of manpower within Presbytery itself it is proposed that this team be made up of 6 members of Presbytery with a further six drawn from congregations within its bounds. If any of our members have experience of assessment, or be interested to become involved and assist Presbytery with these visits, please contact me before 15th March. You do not need to be an Elder or Office Bearer.

A reminder that Professor Tom McLeish (Lecturer in Physics at Durham University) is to give a lecture on Faith and Wisdom in Science at the Corn Exchange, Biggar on Thursday 3rd March. Tickets at £6 each are available from Rev Mike Fucella. Professor McLeish is a theoretical physicist and a Fellow of the Royal Society who has published work on this subject.

Jim Watt (Presbytery Elder Cairngryffe Kirk)

Jack Meikle.

At Jack's funeral, on Saturday 9th January, the tribute was given by Jim Warnock. We reprint his words below.

I don't think I need to say anything today, the numbers packed into the church are testament to Jack's popularity and ability, and rightly so, as Jack's middle names should have been "helping others", both at work and in the community.

It is hard to believe that on Christmas Eve Jack Meikle was standing at the lectern leading the worship at our watchnight service.

Without fail, every Sunday he was here. Cairngryffe Church was his second home and he ensured there was a warm welcome to all who entered in. Jack was special.

I am certain Ena knew that was the kind of man she married, and brother Gilbert and sister Anne, likewise, but daughter Rosemary, and sons, John and Gilbert, really appreciated their dad was one in a million.

To start at the very beginning Jack was born at Gatehouse of Fleet, but the family moved north and his first school in 1942 at the age of 5 was Douglas Primary, where he had to walk 2 miles to the school, and the same home again every day.

At the age of 10 he moved to Robertson Primary, and his schooling finished at 16 years of age in 1953 at Lockerbie Secondary.

Normally when someone moves school as often, they can become what we call 'a problem child', but not Jack. Right from primary age, he attended Sunday School in Penfeigh, or Douglas Water. He was a country boy at heart, and his first job was planting trees for the forestry commission. But in 1954 his dad was offered a double herding at Carserig, Kirkconnel, then in 1957 he became herdsman at Whitecleugh, Crawfordjohn, where he met and married Ena in 1958. They then moved to Nisbet Farm, Coulter, and the following year to Colmonell, Ayrshire, where daughter, Rosemary, was born in 1961. The following year, 1962 the family bought and moved to their present home, Glenbow, where John was born in 1963 and Gilbert in 1965. I can just hear Ena saying, no more moves, please.

Jack kept his hand in, shearing sheep for neighbours and dry-stane dyking, and if you were unlucky enough to skid off the road in black ice with your car in the Lanark/Biggar area and knock down a dyke, then the chances are it would be Jack who would rebuild it.

In 1962 Jack was offered a job with the A.A., as a patrolman on the dreaded Hyndford Bridge to Beattock stretch, and was given a motor bike and sidecar to fulfil his duties. His diligence and dedication were rewarded when a few years later he was allocated a bright yellow mini-van to enable him to carry more equipment, and a bigger box for his sandwiches.

I got to know Jack when he was ordained as an elder at Pettinain Church in 1971, and I asked him what it was like when he was called out to someone stranded, lost or broken down. He replied, I

just apply the good Christian treatment. I asked him what that was and he said, I fire them with the jump leads, clean the windscreen so they can see where they are going, and tell them the fuel tank needs to be filled up every Sunday at church. And if they do all those things they will face the week ahead with their engine purring.

Jack was responsible for a lot of purring engines, but amazingly his engine didn't purr, it roared. He was a doer, 'don't wait till tomorrow, get it done now' was his motto.

That attitude saw him rocket up the ranks in the AA from Patrolman to Sergeant, then moved to Edinburgh as Inspector, then Chief Inspector, followed by the title of Superintendent for the South of Scotland and finally head of agency services for Scotland, N. Ireland, the Western Isles and N. England.

After 40 years service to the automobile association, Jack retired in 2002. What do most normal people do when they retire? They slow down and take things easy. Not Jack, his engine roared like it had never done before.

Appointed Session Clerk here in 2005, he took the reins during vacancies, represented us at joint meetings, organised the worship group and glebe and property maintenance.

The list goes on. His release valve was the bowling club, where he was secretary for 40 years, and might I add, the recipient of a great many trophies from major inter-club tournaments.

Scottish country dancing was his other release, where he, Ena and their friends did demonstration performances far better than anything seen on 'Strictly'.

I have told you what he did here every Sunday, but what about the Jack Meikle who shovelled the snow from the paths and doorways in winter; who sourced and laid hardcore for parking on the drive; who removed and raised funds with the old pews on the creation of our Sunday School room; who parks cars at weddings and funerals, no matter the weather; who cut and drilled slates to repair the roof; who traced the fault when the heating and the lights went out; who made the window flower stands and the pulpit fall cabinet; who helped to compile and print the church newsletter, Focus; who just recently took on the presidency of the "Everyyoung club".

Jack Meikle wasn't just an elder in this church. Jack Meikle was the church. But he had one tiny blemish, he wasn't a great singer. But nobody knew that, because the worst singer in the church sat in the seat in front of him and took the blame for all the off-key notes

Jack will be sorely missed by this church, our sister congregations at Symington and Libberton and Quothquan, and the wider community. But there is one thing for certain he will never be forgotten.

Jim Warnock

A BLESSING ON MY COMPUTER.

God bless my computer as I switch it on this morning.

May its memory safely guard my hard wrung thoughts.

May its programmes accommodate my lack of know-how.

May its 'help' processes be clear when I get lost;

May its spell-check speak English and not American.

May it be humble enough to think I am still in charge;

May our relationship today be short and satisfactory. *Norman Shanks*

Christian Faith Activates a Miracle

On the evening of 11 January, in the space of a heartbeat, life changed completely for Crawford, Sue, Calum & Euan Campbell. A burning log, which knocked over their fire guard, quickly turned their home into a blazing inferno. Within minutes, Sue, who is registered blind, was led to safety by the heroic action of her 16-year-old son, Euan. Crawford had to be called home from work. Calum, their elder son, is a university student, living in Glasgow.

All personal belongings - things which held loving memories and associations - which the family had gathered during the previous 16 years, were destroyed, along with all the internal contents of the house. The Campbells stared, in shock and disbelief, at the charred remains of what had once

been their home. A handful of people watched from a distance, mostly in silence. The despair was almost tangible.

That night, kind friends from Quothquan took the Campbells to their home. The following day, they decided to stay with neighbours in Libberton, in order to be in close proximity to their home. An appeal, written in the early hours of the Tuesday morning, was sent out to the members of Libberton & Quothquan Parish Church asking for proactive, immediate intervention to help re-build a home! Word soon spread around all the friends and neighbours of Libberton & Quothquan.

That same day, those who had witnessed the destruction, and those who had subsequently heard - whose hearts were touched by the plight of the Campbells - were mobilised into action. Love and compassion began to flow. Very quickly, people offered donations of clothing and furniture. An online 'list manager' was initiated to organise donations of food and furnishings. A second, online global appeal for donations of cash, was started.

One week later, at the exact time the fire had started the previous Monday, Sue Crawford & Euan left Libberton to make their way to their new home in Biggar, now fully furnished, and with ample food and clothing. Their lives had been turned around from the depths of despair to new beginnings and new hope for the future. Seeds of love, seeds of hope.

I feel very proud of our church community, and the communities of Libberton & Quothquan who, through their concerted efforts, reached out to Crawford, Sue & Euan in their hour of need. Christian love and compassion had worked a miracle.

Freda Stobo

HYMN PAGE : “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” Hymn 392

Tedd Smith, the pianist for the Billy Graham crusades for over 35 years said of this hymn, “It seems to me that Isaac Watts wrote this text as if he were standing at the foot of Christ’s cross.” Other Hymn-writers have described it as, “the best hymn in the English language.”

Isaac Watts was born in 1674 into a 'non-conforming family – early Protestant dissenters. From a very early age he was accomplished in poetry. His University career would have allowed him to become an Anglican priest, but he chose to be a pastor in dissenting congregations.

He is, in many ways, the father of modern hymn writing. Worship singing was traditionally the Psalms set to metre - the precentor, or song leader, singing a line, and the congregation following.

Isaac Watts believed that hymns should be freely composed and not just hold to the letter of Scripture, so as to give straightforward expression to the thoughts and feelings of those singing, and not merely recall events of the distant past.' And this may very well be the first Hymn written in the first person – 'when I survey'.

In that respect he was a mould-breaker. 'The 600 hymns he wrote in his lifetime, made the transition from a rigid, metrical psalmody to a freer, theologically-based hymnody.' Often his hymns were written for, and first sung, after one of his sermons.

Congregational worship was still led by the precentor, and Watts worked hard to ensure that each line would be self contained – one clear thought to be sung and echoed.

This hymn is particularly powerful because it contains many poetic devices, contrasts and use of language that grab our attention. It can be read and pondered over, and enjoyed for the skill with which the poet creates images in our minds. Particularly powerful is verse 3 – 'see from his head, his hands, his feet...' – we might expect to 'see' blood and water flow, but Watts expresses it as 'sorrow and love' flowing down, 'love and sorrow' meeting.

When I was a minister in Leith I inherited a doxology tradition. Every week, as the offering was brought forward to the communion table, we sang the last verse of this hymn –“were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small....’

It is, of course, a Communion hymn. We will sing it on a Communion Sunday in March at two of our churches. And it is a beautiful song to sing. But worship is not just the giving of ourselves to God in song, it is the giving of all of ourselves to God – as the hymn says, when I see my life in the

context of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, 'love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.' What a powerful ending.

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAIRNGRYFFE

Deaths

Jack Meikle on 2nd January 2016

Doris Galloway, late of The Syde Farm, on 1st February 16

The New Year got off to a sad start with the passing of our Session Clerk, Jack Meikle. Jack was a person gifted with a very high range of knowledge and skills. The warmth and depth of his faith was a true inspiration. This of course shone brightly in the commitment and strength he brought to his position as our Session Clerk. In what could have been difficult times for the congregation he provided a subtle and effective leadership that united and galvanised us all. As a true Christian leader this was always undertaken in a gentle and effective spirit. This is nowhere better illustrated than in his legacy of organising the worship teams. Unanimous recognition of this was reflected at Cairngryffe Session on 11th January when a firm determination to continue and build our capacity to conduct services when necessary was affirmed. Truly he did show us all that we can climb the steepest mountains in serving God. We owe Jack a huge debt for giving us the confidence to keep the flame burning brightly and the memory of his inspiration will light our way forward.

At that session meeting it was agreed that Mary McLellan will succeed to the role of Session Clerk.

A note of thanks and great appreciation is due to Mary and her intrepid crew of helpers for the wonderful job they made of decorating the church for Christmas. Even by the standards already achieved this year was exceptional. We are blessed with the custodianship of a beautiful church and it is a further blessing that such a team as created our Christmas tide interior should be able to reflect this.

Denham Macdougall

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SYMINGTON

Welcome-

We welcome to the congregation, William and Muriel McDougall, Scout Hill, Symington. We are happy that they have decided to join us and we hope that they will continue to feel welcome in Symington Kirk

Farewell

We were saddened to hear of the very sudden death of Joan Prentice, Brookside Place, Symington. Joan was the widow of Peter Prentice and sister-in-law of Etta Prentice. Our thoughts and condolence are extended to her family.

All will be aware of the tragic death of Kirsty Adams, Ballgreen, Symington in a road accident at Fallburns. Our deepest sympathy and thoughts go to her mother, Judith Adams, Millburn Court.

Christmas

A big 'thank you' to everyone – young and less young, who helped to make Christmas in the kirk and very happy time. It was great too, to welcome Fiona Mather and the members of the Tinto After School Club Choir on 13 December. Everyone was uplifted by the enthusiasm and the talent demonstrated by the young people.

Choir

The choir presented an evening of musical entertainment in the church on Wednesday 9 December 2015. This was a very successful event and was attended by around 100 guests who enjoyed not only hearing the choir but also the contributions of several very talented individual members. The musical programme was followed by wine and canapes in the church hall. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the evening a success and to all who attended.

Looking back through previous notes for FOCUS, I noticed that in Autumn 2010 we wondered if that would be the year when we mastered 'Jingle Bells'. Well, it wasn't but this year certainly was!!

We are greatly in need of more contralto and bass singers. If you feel you could help us out please contact Gaynor on 308240 or speak to any choir member. You don't have to be able to read music – just enjoy singing.

Ross Russell, Session Clerk at Symington

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LIBBERTON & QUOTHQUAN

At L and Q we were deeply shocked and saddened to hear of the untimely death of Jack. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ena and her family.

Jack's passing serves to remind us of who is really in charge around here and how important it is to live our lives as best we can in the service of our Lord, as long as we are here, just as he did.

All our Christmas services were great fun and well attended and now we look forward to Spring and Holy Week. See you around at Joint Services.

Lilias Nicholls, Session Clerk at L & Q



Symington Guild

Gaynor opened our January meeting and welcomed Rosemary Turpie and Ian Gilchrist. Rosemary took us on a village walk in and around Crawfordjohn showing slides and pointing out places of interest and Ian took us around Skirling doing likewise. Both passed on a wealth of knowledge and points of history. Members voted a very interesting and enjoyable meeting.

Our next meeting will be on February 25th when we have a speaker from "The Dog's Trust"

24th March we have a painting demonstration by Irene Waterman.

28th April is the date set for our closing dinner.

New Members and visitors are always welcome at our meetings

Contact - Martha Cowan 308657

Cairngryffe Guild

Our Guild meet at 7 p.m. in Thankerton Hall. Forthcoming meetings are as follows :-

Friday 4th March in Cairngryffe Church at 7.30pm --- World Day of Prayer

Wednesday 9th March in Thankerton Hall at 7.00 pm --- Jess Graham - Felt Craft

Wednesday 16th March in Greyfriars Church Hall at 7.30pm --- Summer Rally and AGM
Wednesday 13th April Robertson Arms Hotel at 6.30pm for 7.00pm--- Guild Dinner
Friday 3rd June St Brides Church, Douglas at 7.30pm --- Summer Rally.

New members always welcome. For further information contact **Elizabeth Forbes Secretary**
01555 880353

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

CAIRNGRYFFE SUNDAY SCHOOL 2016 - New Year-Easter Term

Time is always the same as our church service.

We meet in the church at the beginning of the Service, after the children's address we go to the Sunday School Room. Children of nursery and primary school age always welcome.

We are looking at both Old and New Testament Stories. Later in the term we will be preparing for Easter

Dates & Times:

Easter Sunday 27th March, End of Term.

Summer Term starts Sunday 24th April.

For further information, call Rosmairi Galloway 01555 880779
pepperknowes@btinternet.com

SYMINGTON SUNDAY ZONE

It seems a long time since Christmas but I would like to say how delighted I was with the Production that the children put on in December. A big Thank you is due to Hazel, who put it all together, and all the ladies who helped make it happen. Unfortunately we are few in number and things have not improved. BUT small is beautiful and we will soldier on with a few changes.

The leaders put in a lot of work so we have decided to have a meeting in the hall once a month after 'Time Together' in the church with the minister or Other. A fun time but learning all the same! On the other Sundays there will be work sheets relating to the service in Church for any children attending.

We hope this will prove popular and who knows we could be back to Sunday Zone, as it used to be, one day soon.

Days planned so far are as follows :-

February 28th; March 20th (Palm Sunday joint service in Libberton Church) April 24th; May 22nd (Final day for this Session)

We welcome young people of all ages.

Contact:- Jessie Duff 0189 308365 for more information

New Beginnings

NB had a hugely successful Christmas Appeal which enabled us to deliver gifts to 150 children, 93 adults and Festive food hampers to 75 homes - all thanks to the generosity of public donations. We were also the grateful recipients of c.£2,000 in cash donations which included the Watchnight Service collection at Cairngryffe donation of £145. We are very grateful to everyone who donated.
Mary McLellan

FROM OUR KIRK TREASURERS

CAIRNGRYFFE

The Annual Accounts for 2015 are currently with the Auditor, but the provisional figures are :-

| Income 2015 | | Expenditure '15 | |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Offerings | £18,875 | Ministry & Mission | £13,438 |
| Tea Committee | £652 | Minister's Travel | £770 |
| Tax Back | £4,871 | Salaries | £3,199 |
| Donations | £390 | Joint Cong Costs | £2,280 |
| Weddings | £200 | Presbytery Dues | £413 |
| Calendars (net) | £180 | Fabric Repairs | £948 |
| Guild Donation | £200 | Insurance | £650 |
| Investment Income | £134 | Pulpit Supply | £70 |
| War Stock | £101 | Misc Expenditure | £614 |
| Other Income | £358 | | |
| TOT INCOME | £25,961 | TOTAL EXPEND | £22,382 |
| | | Net Surplus | £3,579 |

The accounts will be presented to all members in early March.

Linzi Struthers, Treasurer

SYMINGTON

January to December 2015

| Income 2015 | | Expenditure 2015 | |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Standing Orders | £20,470 | Ministry & Mission | £19,250 |
| Plate Offerings | £3,637 | Presbytery Dues & Minister's Travel | £1,243 |
| Weekly envelopes | £4,504 | Other Staff Costs | £5,701 |
| Gift Aid Tax Back | £6,071 | Joint Cong Exps | £2,137 |
| Other Offerings | £3,403 | Heat & Light | £1,987 |
| General Trustees (CFF) | £1,542 | Fabric Maintenance | £2,404 |
| Other Receipts re Joint Cong | £354 | Insurance Church & Manse | £1,544 |
| Interest & stock redemption | £215 | Stewardship Campaign | £636 |
| Refund from Scottish Gas | £3,119 | NRSV bibles | £764 |
| | | Other Costs | £665 |
| TOTAL INCOME | £43,315 | TOTAL EXPEND | £36,331 |
| | | Net Surplus | £6,984 |

J Eric Carlyle, Treasurer

FLOWER LISTS

| SUNDAY | CAIRNGRYFFE | SYMINGTON |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 21 st Feb 2016 | Sadie Campbell | Margaret Cleland |
| 28 th Feb 2016 | Eleanor Potts | Sheena Carlisle |
| 6 th Mar 2016 | Maureen Bannatyne | Etta Prentice |
| 13 th Mar 2016 | Margaret Bulloch | Ella Hodge |
| 20 th Mar 2016 | No Service | No Service |
| 27 th Mar 2016 | Margaret Smith | Easter Flowers |
| 3 rd April 2016 | Rena Borthwick | Mary Hodge |
| 10 th April 2016 | Barbara Miller | Marlyn Masterton |
| 17 th April 2016 | Cathryn Forrest | Isobel Grierson |
| 24 th April 2016 | Elizabeth Warnock | Margaret McGregor |
| 1 st May 2016 | Liz Hiddleston | Nancy Overend |
| 8 th May 2016 | Sheena Somerville | Nan Warwick |
| 15 th May 2016 | Isobel McClymont | May Lindsay |
| 22 nd May 2016 | Margaret Clarkston | Anne Hill |
| 29 th May 2016 | Carole Gardiner | Jean McCurrach |
| 5 th June 2016 | | Frances Sandilands |

CAIRNGRYFFE EVERYOUNG CLUB

Meetings are held fortnightly on **Thursdays in Thankerton Village Hall at 2.00pm.** and all who are young at heart are welcome!

The programme for the rest of the spring meetings is: -

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 25 th February | Mary Gilbert – Trip to South America |
| 10 th March | Mary McLellan – New Beginnings |
| 24 th March | Denham Macdougall – Development of the Guitar in Folk Music |
| 14 th April | Nick Trevor – The Kimberley Diamond Industry |
| 28 th April | Sadie Campbell – Confessions of a Wedding Planner at Tinto Hotel |

For more information contact Secretary, Charlie Todd, on 01555 308327

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S RURAL INSTITUTE

CARMICHAEL INSTITUTE

Carmichael W.R.I. meet on the second Monday of each month in Carmichael Hall at 7.30pm. For further information contact the Secretary, **Janette Elliot on 01555 880614**

THANKERTON INSTITUTE

Thankerton Rural meets the first Thursday of the month, between September and April, in Thankerton Village Hall. The meetings so far in the 2015/16 session have been varied and well attended.

New members and visitors always welcome. For more information please contact **Secretary Irene Ross on 308738**

PETTINAIN INSTITUTE

Pettinain WRI meets in Pettinain Village Hall at 7.30pm on a Wednesday. Why not join us? New members are welcome.

For more information please contact **Ann Murray on 01555 870379**

SYMINGTON INSTITUTE

New members are always welcome to join us at our meetings in Symington Village Hall on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. We enjoy a talk or demonstration each month on a variety of subjects.

Please contact **Jane Murdoch at 01899 308636** for more information.

Editor's Note

I would like to express grateful thanks to everyone who contributed material for this edition of Focus

The summer edition of **FOCUS** will be issued mid May 2016. Contributions from church groups and organisations, covering the period from June 2016 to the end of August 2016, should be sent to **the Editor by Sunday May 8th at the latest**. I can be reached at: -

Charlie Todd, 63 Station Rd, Thankerton, Biggar ML12 6NZ Tel: 01899 308327 or by email at kandctodd@gmail.com

PRAYER PAGE

'But who do you say I am?' *Gospel of Mark 8:29*

Our journey through Mark's Gospel each Sunday has exposed us to a variety of answers to the question, 'Who do people say that I am?'

*But the question that the writer of Mark seeks **us** to answer is the one in the title. For if Jesus is indeed God's Son, then we know the nature of our God, and we know what our priorities in living must be.*

This prayer by Kathy Galloway follows a similar structure. 'We know this about you, Lord', therefore (so) this is our priority for prayer, and action, in Jesus name.

Lord Jesus,
you are a Lord who walks beside your people.
So we pray for people who march for justice.

You are a Lord who raises up those who are bent low.
So we pray for those held down by the grindings of life
and the indifference of the world.

You are a Lord who feeds the hungry.
So we pray for all who long for bread
and the means to provide it.



You are a Lord who celebrates the small and the insignificant.
So we pray for the children and for those who are never noticed.

You are a Lord who says '*Follow me*'.
So we pray for courage, faith and cheerfulness in our hearts
that we may take up the cross and find it leads to life.

Amen.

Prayer Promoters

Symington – Mike Nisbet Tel 01899 309018

Cairngryffe – Liz Hiddleston Tel 01899 221664

Libberton & Quothquan - Liliias Nicholls Tel 01555 840572

Prayer and Praise

The Try Praying booklet www.trypraying.org says

“Prayer is conversation with God. You don’t need to use special words or a special voice. You can pray out loud or silently. God knows what you think and is familiar with all you do. You can talk to him about anything.”

Prayer and Praise is a short informal service once a month on the third Monday from September to May, organised in turn by our three prayer promoters. Here’s an opportunity to try praying with a few other folk.

We have a Bible reading, a few hymns, usually a short reflection on a current topic and prayers both for home and abroad. We try to make time for quiet too. Come and join us!

Mike Nisbet