

Letter from the editor



As I write this letter the rain is battering against the window and the wind is blowing a gale as it has done for most of January and all of February so far. There were photos in our newspaper the other day of fallen trees crushing a car, of lorries lying on the motorway on their sides and of roads being blocked by trees or closed because of landslides. On the Isle of Mull dramatic footage showed a waterfall being turned upside down as powerful winds blew the water in the opposite direction.

Winds of over 90 miles an hour were recorded in South Uist. You can imagine how seriously people, who live on our western islands like Barra or the Uists, must take the weather. Their lives must be totally dependent on it, for food, for travel, for services. The ferries might not sail for days at a time so everyone must be prepared for that eventuality.

How do some areas prepare for the amount of rain that has fallen? Some counties have had to deal with serious flooding. Cumbria has suffered really badly and people there are now convinced that some houses have been built in the wrong places with inadequate water and flood structures and defences. Likewise here in Scotland communities in Aberdeenshire and Perthshire have also had to deal with a drastic situation.

We here in Britain, I suppose, have had problems which in a global context are relatively minor. We ought not to get too bound up in our own affairs but should be more aware of the troubles in other countries such as Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sudan, where the El Nino effect has caused famine and hardship for millions.

My thanks go to all contributors for their continued support.
Articles for the June magazine should be sent to me by Sunday May 1st
@livingstonechurch.org.uk

Interim Moderator's Letter



Easter will soon be upon us. To many, that means chocolate, eggs, rabbits and even more chocolate or does it? Surely, a thousand years ago people weren't giving chocolate eggs wrapped in brightly coloured paper.

The association of eggs and rabbits with new life goes back beyond Christianity to pagan times when the spring festival was the celebration of new life and the end of the dark winter. In Celtic countries, this was the celebration of Beltane which saw the lighting of bonfires to mark the beginning of the light half of the year. In Germany, there is a tradition of lighting Easter fires from the old Christmas trees. Early Christians adopted the pagan symbols of new life as a reminder of the new life that comes through the Resurrection.

Traditionally, many countries have had some sort of egg rolling competition and in the U.K. this was the original reason for Easter Monday. We can't forget the hot cross buns which also date back to pagan times when the four quarters represented the four seasons of the year and they were eaten all year round. However the early Christians saw the cross as the most important part of the bun as a representation of the cross of Christ, so they kept these precious treats just for Easter.

Yet all these traditions mean nothing without the Easter story so as we enjoy some of these treats, I hope that we also have the time to enjoy the presence of the risen Christ with us. Then as we travel towards Pentecost may we remember that we are the Easter People with the greatest story to share, the story of new hope, new life, not just for us but for everyone.

A blessed Easter to you all,
Ken Welch,
Interim Moderator

Prayer Thoughts



The month of March this year includes Easter, a time of challenging sorrow, followed by great rejoicing. As part of his preparation, Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. It raises the question, how do we deal with the critical times in our lives, be they times of joy or testing. And, perhaps, more crucially, what frame of mind are we in as regards accepting God's decision? Read the words of Jesus prayer from the New Living Translation of the Bible as recorded in Matthew chapter 26, verse 39

"My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will not mine."

There is no disguising what a difficult example this prayer gives us to follow. It challenges us all to have the courage to follow the path God has set out for us which will only ever be possible if we put our complete trust in Him. Only then will we be able to tread life's path in the comforting knowledge that God is sharing our experience every step of the way. In every moment of joy and celebration, every moment of sadness or disappointment God will be there!

Themes

Approach: Quietly repeat the Lord's Prayer and enter God's presence with childlike trust and faith.

Confession: Think of the times of joy and celebration when you have forgotten to thank God, or dark times when you have imagined that God has forgotten you. Ask for God's forgiveness and rejoice in the knowledge that our God will never forget us.

Thanksgiving:

- Ministry – continue to give thanks for David Heberton's work with us.

- Interim Moderator – give thanks for the work that Ken Welch does on our behalf.
- JAM club – give thanks for the young people who come and for the dedication shown by Luisa and her band of helpers.
- Faithfulness – give thanks for the faithfulness shown in many different aspects of church life, regular attendance, regular giving, recording services, maintaining the church website, flowers, looking after our fabric, the guild. We have lots to be thankful for!

Intercession:

- Our Schools -pray for the staff that they will have a care both for their teaching and their pupils. Pray for the pupils that they will develop a positive attitude to learning.
- Difficulty - pray for those known to you who face bereavement or health difficulties
- Absent Members - pray for those who have drifted from the church that we might have a positive approach to encouraging their return.
- Lost - Pray for those who have lost touch with God that they may be encouraged to find their way back to Him.

Ministry - pray that God will direct a minister to come and lead us in Livingstone and Ardeer.

Andrew Tomlinson

The Guild



The Guild, since the New Year, has had interesting meetings on a variety of subjects, each of which have been well attended. Of the 26

members of the Guild, 8 come from other churches and continue to come and join in our fellowship so we must be doing something right.

In the 7 weeks until Easter we have talks on one of the projects 'Caring for Mother Earth in Bolivia' for Christian Aid; a talk about VIP/Royal Security; an afternoon concert by Largs Accordion Band to name just a few.

We are collecting unwanted or old jewellery to send to the Alzheimer's Society to raise funds for their vital work. The response so far has been amazing. The Guild ladies are always willing to help worthwhile causes.

Our session will conclude as always with our Easter Service after our AGM and our Daffodil Tea on the Tuesday of Holy Week after the evening service.

Dorothy Penno

Aladdin 2015



A big thank you to everyone for helping to make the 2015 pantomime a great success. The four night sell out run was once again exhausting but extremely rewarding for all the cast. The new black wool serge curtains added a further dimension to the brilliantly designed scenery and props which made Aladdin a pantomime to remember.

To further enhance the pantomime experience, we sold ice cream for the first time in many years. It was such a success that we had to order

more supplies from Porelli in Paisley to avoid our audience being disappointed.

Everyone had great fun rehearsing and performing the pantomime but you - the audience - are as much a part of the cast as the players themselves. Your attendance each year is invaluable; hopefully to enjoy a great night's entertainment and of course enabling us all to raise money for Christian Aid.

Thank you all for playing your part and supporting us. Remember to check our website - livingstoneplayers.org.uk - for details of our upcoming production. See you again in a few months for our 2016 pantomime!

Ross Glover

Wedding Congratulations



We send our congratulations and very best wishes, on the occasion of their marriage, to Wilson and Lynn Kerr(née Blair). Wilson and Lynn were married in Park Church Ardrossan on January 5th followed by a reception at the Brisbane House Hotel in Largs.

Letter of thanks



A thank you letter from Isobel Quinn, Support Worker from North Ayrshire Council was received by Sandy Hershaw on 11th January. In it

Isobel thanked the congregation for their generosity and reported that over 200 vulnerable children in the three towns benefitted from the distribution of gifts at Christmas time.

Letter of thanks (Shoebox appeal 2015)



Thank you for participating in our 2015 Shoe Box appeal. We appreciate the support and thank you very much for the filled boxes you donated. Every box has a big impact on the life of the child, teenager or adult who receives it. Things we take for granted can be luxuries to many people.

We hope you enjoyed your involvement and that you will consider taking part again in 2016.

Fabric Committee Report



This quarter has been very busy in quite a few different ways.

The props and curtains for the pantomime were completed on time and everyone enjoyed the entertainment. More concrete has been laid at the front of the church and we hope it will be more convenient for parking.

Just as we thought we were well prepared for the winter, the boiler for the halls broke down and we had to get a complete new boiler, gas pipes and flue. Unfortunately some of the organisations were inconvenienced but we could not get spares because the boiler was 20 years old and worn out.

We had a “toilet problem” at the same time as the pantomime was taking place but the need to cancel the show was avoided thanks to the work of David McNaught and the lads in the Fabric Committee who managed to locate the source of the blockage and put the system in working order . “Many thanks lads for your help.”

The S.A.S. Scout group are now using the halls on a Thursday night and did a good deed straight away by moving the heavy piano back into the large hall from the lesser hall.

“Well Done,” everyone.

Explorer Scouts



The S.A.S. Explorer scouts are currently meeting in the church hall on a Thursday night whilst the Scout hut in Ardrossan is rebuilt. The name of the unit comes from the names of the three towns of Saltcoats, Ardrossan and Stevenston as the scouts come from these towns. The scouts are aged between 14 and 18 years of age.

We have a varied programme based on the scout training programme. In the past months we went to the International scout centre in Kandersteg, Switzerland where the scouts climbed glaciers, climbed mountain, took part in white water rafting and swam in very cold glacier lakes. We assisted with the church pantomime, went to the Glasgow climbing centre and also to the scout outward bound centre at Lochgoilhead.

We are very grateful to the Church for allowing us to make use of your church hall. Many thanks.

Alastair Dodds

Explorer scout leader

Brownies Scottish Evening



It was lovely to catch up with the Brownies at their Thursday meeting on 25th January. After the meeting began in the usual way, Pat, Brown Owl, introduced me to the girls and I set about teaching them some round the room ceilidh dances and some easy four couple set dances as well. We danced the Military Two Step and the Canadian Barn dance with ease. The Gay Gordons however caused one or two of the younger girls to get into a bit of a fankle as it does when being done for the first time.

The favourite set dance was the Virginia Reel with all the turning and DoSiDoing and the girls learned two new ones, 'A Reel for Jeannie' and 'Charlestown Chaser'.

While we waited for the Haggis, Neeps and Tatties to be served, the Brownies entertained us with several Scots poems. There was Robert Burns's 'Willie Wastle,' performed by Lydia Maher, Sienna Gowrie, Beth Parker and Kirsten Woods. The 'Twa legged Mice' by JK Annand, was recited by Skye Robson, and 'Street Talk' also by JK Annand was performed by Lily and Rosie Alexander. To round off the entertainment, 'A Dug a Dug' by Bill Keys was acted with great gusto by Robyn Murphy, Abigail Borland, Lucy Turner and Emily Bennett. Suffice to say all of us at the Brownies' Scottish Evening had a great time.

Catherine Reid

Churches in the Presbytery

This time we find out about Park Church in Ardrossan. My thanks go to Margaret Ballantine, a member of Park Church for getting this information for us.

Park Church Ardrossan



On 9 January 1857, fifteen men met in Ardrossan and agreed to take steps to form a United Presbyterian Church Congregation.

The first elders were ordained in May of that year and the first Communion was held on 26 July 1857. The first minister, the Rev William Murray was inducted on 22 December 1857 and the original church building in Glasgow Street (now the Church of the Nazarene) was opened for public worship on 27 December 1857.

In 1900 the congregation agreed to union with the Free Church and the church became Park United Free Church of Scotland.

In 1929 the congregation assented to union with the Church of Scotland retaining the name “Park” and was allocated a parish in Ardrossan, North of Eglinton Road.

In 1942, the congregation agreed, with the approval of Presbytery to be ‘transported’ eventually to a new building situated centrally in the Park Parish.

Located at the corner of Dalry Road and Stanley Road, the church was named after James Park schoolmaster of the Parochial School of Ardrossan from 1837 to 1850. The foundation stone of this building was laid on 14 June 1958 and the Church was formally opened on 26 September 1959.

Park Church is a brick built building, designed by James Houston of Kilbirnie. The original side walls of the church consisted of long Flemish glass windows, which were eventually replaced because the church was cold and they were vulnerable. Inside on the wall behind the

communion table there is a plaster cast of the four gospels. Matthew is represented by an angel, the other three Apostles by an animal and bird-Mark, a lion: Luke, an ox: John, an eagle. The chancel furniture is of plain dark wood and was made in Beith.

Ardrossan Park is a friendly and enthusiastic church, giving wide service to the community through its work with both young and old. Many organisations are available at Park Church and are open to the community as well as to members of the church. They are the popular Autumn Club, the Craft Group, the Girls' Brigade, the Boys' Brigade, the Sunday School, the Guild and the Men's Group.

The present minister is the Rev Tanya Webster who has been in office since March 2011.

Presbytery Report



The main item for discussion in December was ‘ Overture under the Barrier Act’ amending Ministers and Deacons in civil partnerships 2015. Basically this was asking Presbytery to decide that since the Scottish Government had legally recognised same sex marriage in addition to civil partnerships, should the Church amend its regulations to allow Ministers and Deacons in, or potentially in, such marriages to be called to/remain in a congregation. In other words this would bring the regulation for same sex marriages into line with the current position on civil partnerships.

This is an important matter for discussion and I feel that the Session reluctance to appoint a Presbytery Elder sooner, has meant that we have lost the opportunity to discuss this before the Presbytery vote was taken.

There were contributors to both for and against. One speaker gave a very traditionalist view referring to biblical texts both Old and New Testament as a basis for rejection. Another pointed out that while the document states that this is not a theological decision but a legal one the Church's own legal committee stated the exact opposite and while this confusion existed the overture should be rejected. Counter arguments included the principal that no congregation should be barred from calling a Minister of their choice. There were strong sincerely held convictions for both sides of the debate. The final vote was 34 for and 18 against. Thus the accepting of the overture was passed.

February Meeting

- There was a tribute to Karen Anderson a presbyter and long standing member of Largs St.Columba's and Tabeetha school, Israel.
- Fiona Blair has accepted the appointment as Safeguarding Trainer in place of Sheena Marr.
- Fiona Ross has recovered sufficiently to resume her work at Kilbirnie.
- The Presbytery is looking for a new treasurer as Anne Turner wishes to relinquish this role. Any Church member with suitable experience and is willing to volunteer let Ken or me know before March 15.
- It was noted that Ardeer and ourselves would have a joint service on Feb 28.
- Several property items were discussed. Cumbrae are to go ahead with their £600000 rebuilding project. Beith are to spend £20000 pounds on their WW1 windows. Lamlash are in discussion with North Ayrshire concerning their manse and glebe lands. The latter were threatened with a compulsory purchase order. Kilmory has received a substantial interest free loan to repair its roof. These along with other projects, including Ardeer, High Kirk, Largs St John's exemplify the dynamic

forward looking aspect of our Church which is not widely known and perhaps deserves to be.

- Should we have a messy Church?

Mansfield Kilwinning has one so does West Kilbride and St Cuthbert's is setting one up. Imagine messier combined with a weekday and you have some have invited anyone who is how theirs operates, are welcome to visit.



the JAM club only meal held on a idea. Mansfield interested in seeing (Saturdays 4-6),

- Office Bearers' and Elders' Conference

Tulliallan Police College April 29 -30 (5pm-5pm) Cost £65
Anyone interested see me for further details.

F. Kerr (Presbytery Elder)

Our Stained Glass Windows



Churches have used stained glass windows through the ages to decorate their buildings, illustrate their beliefs, remember their favourite sons and daughters and even educate their people. Many windows in many cathedrals and churches in many countries are rightly famous for their

artistic splendour and they attract many tourists and admirers. Such fame has not as yet reached us in Livingstone and probably never will.

But as we arrive in our beloved church Sunday by Sunday we are surely impressed and inspired by the three beautiful examples of the stained glass-artists skill which grace the wall we face then and throughout the service. To us I am sure they are "wordy o' a grace as lang as my arm"

The windows have been with us in our church and our worship for some eighty years reminding us in their scenes from the life of Christ and the associated biblical texts of God's love and care. Surely these scenes and texts are a legacy from the donor to the church and the people he loved and served all during his long life.

When James Morrison commissioned these memorials in the late 1930s to his dear wife who died in 1902 and his much-loved only daughter who passed away in 1924, he did not know that he would be granted some 25 years to share their inspiration and beauty with our congregation until he died in 1963 aged 104.

During that last quarter of his life Mr Morrison's service to church and community was recognised. He was elected to be the first Provost and Freeman of the Burgh of Stevenston. His completion of sixty years as Session Clerk in our church was marked by an Address from the elders which honoured him as a "devoted churchman, a Christian gentleman and a humble disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ".

We look forward to enjoying the inspiration these lovely windows bring us for many more years.



If money doesn't grow on trees, how come banks have so many branches?

What do you call a minister on a motor bike? Rev.

Finance Report for 2015



The Church's ASM will be held after the Communion Service on March 6th so the complete Annual Report will be available then. For this article I thought I would just give year end comparisons for 2014 and 2015

Main Fund Balances	2014(£)	2015(£)
General Fund	-1028	48
Designated Fund	5463	6377
Restricted Funds	1767	2163
Fabric Fund	10214	5822
Beneficiary/Reserve Funds	125886	124667

Comparison of Offerings	2014	2015
Plate	1284	1185
Gift Aided	25457	24591
Free Will Offering	9254	10473

Overall Offerings up by 0.7% compared to same period last year.

Comparison of Total Income	53224	53220
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Our income from all sources is almost exactly the same as last year.

Comparison of Expenses	60924	48358
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Overall expenses for 2015 are up 26%

The main reason for the large increase in expenditure has been due to:

1. The recommencement of stipend payments.
2. Storm damage to the Large Hall.
3. Major fabric projects (the apse windows and car parking at the front of the Church).

Together these come to £8825. While hopefully the storm damage is a one off, the stipend payment will be double next year and we have already had enforced major fabric expenses this year.

This, combined with an increased Ministry and Mission contribution of £300 per month, guarantees that the expenditure for 2016 will be even greater.

We are already claiming as much as we can from Gift Aid and Small Donations Scheme but with the dividends from the Trusts, being bound to be less, our income from external sources will be diminished.

There is really no possible source of income other than from ourselves. We have already had to take money from our reserves to pay for the new boiler and I would not want to have to do this too often. It is alarming that our Fabric Fund has gone from £10000 plus this time last year to being in deficit.

We are not in but are close to a cash flow crisis. I would therefore ask all members to prayerfully consider what they contribute financially to their Church. When last did you increase your offering? Could you gift aid your offering but haven't? Do you fill your envelopes every week? A small increase from many would make a huge difference to our financial position and it is always better to face up to a problem before it becomes a crisis.

My apologies for sounding like the prophet of doom but I believe that knowing the situation allows people to make better decisions.

We still have several outstanding invoices which will reduce further the General Fund and Fabric Fund balances

As you will have noticed there has been work done on the windows and the front of the Church. The bills for these are still outstanding.

Free Will Offering envelopes for 2016 are being distributed now. If you do not receive a set please inform your elder. Likewise if you receive a set but give by standing order tell your elder who will pass the information to Robbie Burns our envelope organiser.

Finlay Kerr (Treasurer)

Bible Quiz



Can you supply the missing words speaking so eloquently of God's comfort?

1. "Blessed are they that _____, for they shall be comforted."
2. "Thy _____ and thy _____, they comfort me."
3. "For the Lord shall comfort _____: he will comfort all her waste places."
4. "As one whom his _____ comforts, so will I comfort you."
5. Jesus said, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy _____ hath made thee whole."
6. "So the church....was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the _____ it was multiplied."
7. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of _____ and God of all comfort"
8. "But God who comforts the _____, comforted us by the coming of Titus....."

Answers at end of magazine

Church Diary



Regular worship Each Sunday at 10am

Wednesday morning service in the church hall at 10.30am.

28 February Joint Service with Ardeer Church in Livingstone Church at 11am, seeking God's further help in our search for a minister and to sustain us during vacancy.

Sunday 6th March:

Communion Sunday

Service in Livingstone at 10am and in Ardeer at 11.30am

Annual Stated Meeting of Congregation will be held on 6th March after the service.



Monday 21st March Combined service in Ardeer at 6.30pm.

Tuesday 22nd March Service in Ardeer and Livingstone at 6.30pm.

Wednesday 23rd March Combined service in Livingstone at 6.30pm.

Thursday 24th March Joint Communion service in Ardeer at 7pm.

Friday 25th March Combined Service in Ardeer at 6.30pm

Word search for the JAM Club

B	E	A	U	T	I	F	U	L	B
R	L	I	P	S	H	D	N	I	W
I	C	K	U	W	E	I	D	O	I
G	R	N	D	P	A	G	N	M	S
H	N	C	O	L	D	D	I	G	E
T	A	I	E	T	E	S	N	U	S
H	H	M	N	R	D	G	B	W	F
E	O	O	F	R	R	R	L	E	R
M	E	U	C	E	O	Y	O	L	I
E	L	N	A	A	N	M	S	L	P
L	P	T	L	C	J	R	V	K	E
L	R	A	L	M	I	G	H	T	Y
A	U	I	S	V	O	A	N	D	E
M	P	N	E	D	A	M	B	T	S
S	E	R	U	T	A	E	R	C	A

ALL
CREATURES
WONDERFUL
THEM
RIVER
EYES
AND
RIPE

THINGS
GREAT
LORD
PURPLE
SUNSET
LIPS
COLD

BRIGHT
SMALL
GOD
HEADED
MORNING
ALMIGHTY
WIND

BEAUTIFUL
WISE
MADE
MOUNTAIN
SKY
WELL
SUN

Recipe for Easter Biscuits



Ingredients

- 85g butter
- 85g caster sugar
- 1 lemon (zest)
- 170g plain flour
- ½ tsp mixed spice
- 50g currants
- 1 egg, beaten

You will also need:

biscuit cutters

Method

1. Preheat oven to 190degrees C/375degrees F/Gasmark 5 .
2. Cream butter and sugar until pale.
3. Add lemon rind, then fold in flour, mixed spice, currants and enough egg to bind mixture to a stiff dough.
4. Roll out biscuit dough to approx. 1cm thick and cut out bunny shapes or circles which you can squash into ovals for egg shapes.
5. Put on greased baking trays.
6. Bake biscuits for 8 to 10 minutes or until golden brown.
7. Sprinkle with extra caster sugar when still hot, then transfer to a wire tray to cool.
8. Or wait until cooled and decorate with icing and mini eggs.



Answers to Bible quiz

1. mourn, Matthew 5:4 KJV
2. rod/staff, Psalm 23:4, KJV
3. Zion, Isaiah 51:3 KJV
4. mother, Isaiah 66:13
5. faith, Matthew 9:22 KJV
6. Holy Spirit, Acts 9:31
7. mercies, 2 Corinthians 1:3.
8. downcast, 2 Corinthians 7:6