

Faith and Fellowship

The Quarterly Magazine for Ardeer/Livingstone Linkage



'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son'
— John 3:16

DECEMBER 2019

Editor's Letter



Welcome to the December edition of Faith and Fellowship, the first joint magazine edition for Ardeer and Livingstone. As such we've got double the usual fun with two Treasurer's Reports and even two Guild updates! There's also news from various youth organisations and some interesting items from guest contributors. I hope that you enjoy this new format and especially wish to thank the contributors from Ardeer in helping to make this a truly joint effort. I greatly appreciate the fact that I now have double the hunting-grounds for articles. As I don't normally attend Ardeer outside joint services, I rely on intimations and heavy use of the magazine email address for communication. Please don't hesitate to contact me at magazine@livingstonechurch.org.uk if there is anything you want to see in the magazine.

You may have noticed that this issue has come out in colour. This little luxury is to specially mark the launch of our joint magazine adventure as well as to celebrate the time of year. Because of the timing of events, the Christmas Fayre at Livingstone is now past and hopefully was as successful as the Pantomime will be in the coming week. A full (as far as I am aware) list of December services can be found later in this issue.

As we approach the season of Advent, I find it too easy to get caught up in the thoughts of 'What am I getting for this person?', 'Who is coming over when?' etc. I find it strange that, coming up to one of the most important dates in the Christian calendar, it's harder, rather than easier, for me to focus on my faith and values than at other times of the year. It is with conscious effort that I break through the materialistic noise of the season to reach for the truth about Christmas and the promise it holds. Hopefully we'll all enjoy the upcoming carols, festivities and advent services while remembering the message of Christmas. With this in mind, I wish you all a joyous Christmas.

Minister's letter



For to us a child is born. To us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NIV)

Dear Friends,

I'm going to acknowledge, in one sentence, that there have been significant challenges for us this year, specifically in terms of buildings. Having done that, I'm putting it aside as there's much more to see in terms of what God has been doing. My call here is to move us into a union and in starting that process, I have been preaching around discipleship and the importance of being together. Paul writes about the importance of the unity of the body of Christ and that we all have different talents, skills and abilities to bring to the body. We are one family in Christ and with Christ. As we approach Christmas and a new year, we hear a lot about family and family time.

The Almighty God is our Father and His Son, Christ Jesus, is the King and Head of the Church and His zeal, His Holy Spirit, brings about the power and force for our transformation as part of that family. It is our Father who gives up His Son for us and for our redemption and we are called into His family to be part of that family and to help in the building up of the Kingdom. As we glorify Him and respond to the love that he has for each one of us, we begin to build in love; love for God and love for our neighbours, including our enemies.

Being part of the family means that we love those in our family, our blood relatives, our “honorary” family members, our adopted family members AND our brothers and sisters in Christ. These present challenges to us because we’re human and sometimes we struggle to love but it is to love our neighbours that we are called. Our own context means that we need to bring 2 parts of the family in Christ together: our Presbytery Plan brings us to a union. The Kirk Sessions are meeting jointly, we’ve shared worship and this newsletter is a joint newsletter: all signs of growing together. I believe that there’s nothing to fear here and much more to be gained as we build Kingdom in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But it does mean that we will have to, albeit reluctantly, let go of some of the things we hold on to see that union form. As 2 congregations, 2 parts of the family, we will covenant to God and to each other to give Him the glory. Loving our neighbours means that we are also called to be missional. Jesus gave us the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” As a family in Christ, we’re called to go out and share the Good News with others. This is Kingdom building. There are many who will rely on foodbanks and other assistance including the gifts that we bring in worship on 8th December. Our calling is not just to give but to connect with the people around us and this can be a challenge for us.

This is our UP, IN and OUT: I’ve used the triangle shape before to illustrate this but since we’re coming up to Christmas, I thought a Christmas Tree might work! UP to our God; IN to our families including church families and OUT to the parishes, the communities around us.



Maureen and I pray that God blesses each one of you and your families this Christmas.

Dave.

Moderator of Presbytery's Letter

Dear Friends,

A few days before being installed as Moderator I visited the Readers Conference and joined them for lunch. After lunch I was asked to introduce myself, and as I did, I mentioned I had only three more sleeps before my installation. One person remarked that as Christmas approached, when he was young, he counted the sleeps before Santa arrived with presents. Children throughout the world look forward to Christmas morning when they waken early just like my daughter as a child. She was always up first about 5.00am, she would waken her brothers, my wife and myself and we always went together to see if Santa had called with presents. This I am sure is what happens in a lot of homes with the excitement of Christmas morning. We are fortunate, but many in this country and elsewhere are less so, some children will waken and have no presents to open and the family no food for Christmas dinner.



During advent we have Christmas gift services bringing presents for children less fortunate than ours. We have people who organize the collections for the food bank so that some may after all be able to sit as a family on Christmas day enjoying food and fellowship together.

Christmas is not just a day of giving and receiving presents and enjoying dinner with family and friends. We should never forget the real meaning of Christmas. We should take time to remember the real reason why we celebrate, the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph. As the

Christmas story tells us there was no room for them at the Inn so Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem, he was wrapped in swaddling cloth and placed in a feeding trough. Mary and Joseph had little and after the birth a bright star appeared in the sky above the stable and guided the three wise men who brought gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh for the new Messiah. Jesus is the greatest gift given to the world some two thousand years ago and we must never forget this gift. I never tire of singing Hymn 306, after midnight at our Watchnight service, of the word of the last verse,

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given:
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing.

This is the greatest gift. May God's blessings be with you all at this Christmas time and let us never forget as we celebrate with family and friends the real meaning of Christmas.

Allan Richardson

Ardeer Session Clerk's Letter

This is a new venture for me, as I prefer to be working in the background being asked for an article for your (Our) magazine was kind of out of my comfort zone and I was at a loss for words. I can hear all who know me saying: "Lost for words? No way!" For those who don't know me, a wee introduction. I am Session Clerk of Ardeer Parish, the other half of the Linkage. I had always managed to get away without doing an article but our editor, bless him, can be a wee bit persistent, so this is the first and maybe once you have read it, you might persuade him not to ask me again. So, the question is, what do you want me to write about? As I am sure the articles from the likes of Church Worship, Guild,



Boys Brigade and Sunday School, have all been received and make for better and more interesting reading.

I will be even more serious now and say that I feel I have to mention the difficult and challenging times the church is facing, not only in Stevenston but also in Scotland. We, as a linked charge, should work together towards Union through prayer and faith, believing that God will guide and lead us through the transition. Remembering that all things work together for good to them that love God. If we want to move on, we must be together doing the best we can for the people of Stevenston.

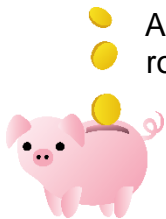
May I take the opportunity to wish one and all a very Happy Christmas and good wishes for the year ahead.

Kay Tudor. (Ardeer Session Clerk)

Ardeer Finance Report

General Funding

As indicated at the Annual Stated meeting in June, the closure of Ardeer from late February to mid-July this year has had a significant negative impact on the level of general income received in the year to date. Despite an increase in weekly offerings following the return to the Ardeer building, from £484 to £607 per week, general income has fallen short of that needed to meet all our 2019 financial obligations.



Although we have been able to maintain payments for routine expenditure such as salaries, insurance, energy supplies, manse costs and minor fabric repairs, payments against our Ministries and Mission allocation fall significantly short of the required £25,489.

Based on weekly income levels similar to that obtained during August to October, plus expenditure levels in line with that budgeted for the remainder of the year, it is estimated that we will be in a position to cover approximately 50% of the required 2019 M & M allocation. As we recorded a shortfall of £2,950 against the 2018 allocation, the congregation will show a total deficit of £15,000 in M & M payments at year end.



A number of initiatives are being undertaken to increase our income level, such as fundraising activities during the latter half of the year. An additional Gift Aid application is currently being prepared plus we are looking at the possibility of a further Stewardship campaign during 2020.

Thanks to all who organised and supported our fundraising efforts and to those who provide additional income via the Gift Aid scheme.

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We hope to hold a further funding event early December. More information will be provided when the details have been finalised.

Our largest source of income is obtained through member offerings. Almost 75% of general income is realised through your offerings. Again, thanks to everyone for your ongoing financial support.

We recognise that some of our members have already made a significant increase in the level of regular giving. Unfortunately, due to our falling membership, plus the reduced number of people attending worship on a regular basis, our offerings total is falling year on year. Faced with increasing costs the financial burden is resting with a smaller number of people.



We know that over the next 3 to 5 years, the Church of Scotland will undergo radical change which will impact the number of congregations and buildings both nationally and here in Stevenston. It is therefore important that we take steps to demonstrate that we are able to halt the fall in and improve on our level of general income.

Our lower than anticipated income from offerings and the mounting deficit in M & M payments continues to cause concern. If you are able to increase your weekly offerings your support would be most welcome. Also, if you currently pay income tax and would like to know more about how the church can recover 25% of your offerings via Gift Aid please speak to myself or Margaret Montgomery.

Jim Dunwoodie. (Ardeer Treasurer)

Livingstone Finance Report



October figures are provisional as not all data is available.

This quarter can be the lowest point of our cash balance. This year we managed to maintain a month's expenditure in balance so did not require money from the reserves.

We should end the year more or less even but with continuing expenses and major fabric projects in the offing our fabric reserves will be severely depleted next year.

Below is a summary of the third quarter for 2019:

2019	July	August	September	{October}
General Account				
Balance brought forward	-319	-2697	-3652	4560
Income	2150	3385	122246	2312
Expenditure	4527	4341	4033	4410
Main income and expenditure items:				
Gift Aid refund			8723	
Income from collections				
Compared to 2018 Gifts	+11%	+10.6%	+8.7%	+7.6%
			150	
Expenses	3309 per month M&M February-November 200 per month manse fund 200 per month cleaning etc. 271 per month Electricity 65 for the quarter Gas 674 for the quarter			
Fabric	July	August	September	{October}
Brought forward	3831	3572	3699	4893
Income	80	75	75+1370	75
Expenditure	39 per month boiler cover 138 PAT tests 78 for maintenance and emergency lighting 207 for fire safety inspection, signs and extinguishers			
Designated Funds	July	August	September	{October}
Brought forward	4716	4770	4703	5980
Income	67	55	33	1275
Expenditure	0	0	100	20
Bequest Funds	July	August	September	October

J. Little Fund	39795	39518	39719
Beneficiary Fund	105707	104896	105509
J.W.B. Fund	560	560	560
Cash balance	7523	5232	4318

Finlay Kerr. (Livingstone Treasurer)

Prayer Thoughts

We know that the 'Lord's Prayer' comes to us after the disciples made the request, '*Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.*' That part of the story is very well known, but it is interesting to go on and see what else Jesus said at the time. If we turn to Luke chapter 11, we find, not only the words of the Lord's Prayer, but further advice about prayer. Verses 5 to 8 give us a story about persistence. At first it doesn't seem relevant - a tale of asking a neighbour for some food at midnight. In the following verses the purpose of the story is revealed verses 9 and 10;

'Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks.'



The verses raise the questions; 'What are we to look for? What are we to ask for?

If I am very persistent in asking God for £1,000,000, does it mean the cheque will drop through my door? This is a very human, a

very worldly interpretation and not at all what Jesus was trying to teach. Rather, Jesus was pointing his disciples to the request that would keep them on God's path and empower them to make prayer requests that would help in the building of God's kingdom. Verse 13 reveals the answer;

'If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.'

There then is the request that should be at the core of our prayers, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Having the gift of the Spirit will make us better able to discern what we can do for God. What, then, will you pray for?

Themes

Approach: come before God humbly but in the knowledge you are there at His invitation.

Confession: review your prayer life and ask God to forgive it's weaknesses.



Thanksgiving:

- Ministry – give thanks for Dave Sutherland and his ministry with us and Brian Devlin in his role.
- Path of Renewal/Priority Areas Conferences – give thanks for the guidance and encouragement given.
- Blytheswood Appeal – give thanks for the boxes donated and remind us the need is not confined to Christmas.

- Use of IT – give thanks for flexibility this allows and the outreach it offers via the church website.



Intercession:

- Prayer Life – pray that there will be a reinvigoration of the churches prayer life.
- Buildings – pray that our buildings will be fit and appropriate to continue our mission in the town.
- Christmas – pray that the importance of Jesus birth will rise above the commercialism.
- Stevenston – pray that the churches will be able to respond to the needs of the townspeople, particularly those suffering hardship.

Andrew Tomlinson.



Livingstone Players are proud to present their 2019 pantomime – Mother Goose - based on a script written by Roy McGregor and directed by Anne Cochrane. We have 15 fantastic children in our junior cast and as ever, they are extremely talented and have been working really hard every Sunday afternoon. They are sure to entertain on stage with an array of songs and dance routines.

We are delighted that some of our long serving junior cast members have joined the adult cast this year. It is always nice to see the progression and development of our juniors as they grow

up and become the next generation of principal cast members. Why not buy a ticket and come along to the show? The pantomime is sure to be filled with laughs, fun, music and dance as we follow the story of Mother Goose. Will our heroes Johnny and Jenny live happily ever after? What mischief will Priscilla the Goose (Dorothy Taylor) get up to? Or will the nasty Squire Spurtle (Wilson Kerr) spoil the story? You'll have to come along to find out!

This year, the pantomime will take place on Tuesday 3rd-Friday 6th December in Livingstone Church Hall. Tickets are priced at £7 for adults and £5 for children. Proceeds will go to Christian Aid. The tickets have designated row and seat numbers and are on sale now. As usual, tickets sell quickly so don't delay as we are limited to how many people we can accommodate in the hall.

If you don't know any cast members or can't buy tickets on a Sunday after morning worship then you can buy your tickets online at our website: www.livingstoneplayers.org.uk. Here, you will find lots of information about our past productions. Our Facebook page and Instagram also have regular updates about Mother Goose and future performances. Simply search for Livingstone Players on Facebook or Livingstone Players on Instagram.



At the time of going to print we have already sold almost 700 tickets and our Wednesday performance has sold out with the others not far behind! We are extremely grateful to our audiences who return each year and hope you will come and support us again. This year, we have installed a new curtain and rail at the rear of the stage as well as further lighting improvements as part of our ongoing desire to enhance the show.

As always, we are very thankful for the efforts of the technical and backstage crew as well as the work party who have been busy painting the backdrop and making props to enhance the show. Along with our increasing range of merchandise and ice cream available at affordable prices, our 2019 pantomime is sure to live long in the memory - oh yes it will! We look forward to seeing you there!

Livingstone Players



Ardeer Guild



Ardeer Guild meets every Monday evening at 7.15pm in Ardeer Church Hall. This is the 97th year since the Guild started in Ardeer.

Each week we enjoy speakers telling us about a variety of interesting topics.

So far this year we have had visits from Frank Whitecross speaking about Police Dogs, Derek Fairclough on Mary's Meals and George McGrattan on the history of Ardrossan Castle.

We look forward to Bob Johnstone from the RNLI, Fiona Watson speaking about recycling and Robert Deans from the Salvation Army.

Everyone is welcome to come and join us on a Monday evening.

James McLellan.



Livingstone Guild



Our Guild season has so far been successful. We enjoyed the quiz set by "121" for Guild Week and the winning team was Sandra Erskine, Jessie Cowan and Catherine Reid. At the end of Guild Week we had our Dedication Service on September 15th.

On 24th September we held our annual Tea/Coffee Afternoon in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support and we have received a thank you card for our contribution of £232.40 for this very worthy charity. Marion Howie spoke of the "Companions on the Way" in her life, this being the theme for this session.

On October 8th we visited the Auchengree Farm Shop and Tea room and the experience of using the Dalry By-pass was a bonus.

On October 15th we heard about the first of two Guild Projects we are supporting this session. The project comes from Crossreach and is called 'Join up the Dots' which is trying to tackle loneliness and Social Isolation in Scotland. The speaker was Mary Ford and we learned how the project is working. We have decided to make up a small booklet listing the many meetings etc. that are on in the Three Towns on week days.

Rev. Scott Cameron entertained us on October 22nd by explaining how he has written new verses on bible themes and set them to well-known tunes. He had us all singing and the ladies enjoyed Scott's visit very much.

On 29th October Allen Richardson talked about the 'History of Beith Furniture' and showed us slides of furniture made in Beith from Grandfather Clocks to dining table sets to church furniture. He also told us that he is the present Moderator of Ardrossan Presbytery!!

In November the Guild will be preparing for their contribution to the Christmas Fayre on 23rd November from 10am – 2pm. By the time you read this, the Fayre will have taken place and I do hope you attended and made it a success!! The money raised will be announced in due course.

We have a concert for St Andrew's Day on 26th November with the Largs Accordion Band providing the music. Hopefully it will be well attended.

On December 3rd the Guild ladies will make their annual visit to entertain the residents of South Beach House.

The rest of December will be taken up with thoughts and stories of Christmas and end with our AGM and Christmas Service.

Dorothy Penno.

Flower Calendar



The new flower calendar is now being made up and there are a few spaces, we are looking for volunteers to help arrange and deliver the flowers. If you could help in any way, please let me know, I would be most grateful.

I'd like to thank all the ladies for their help over the year. Thanks to everyone for your very kind donations, these go a long way to making sure that someone always benefits from a nice bunch of flowers. I hope you all have a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Liz Canavan.

Children's Church



As you read this, we will only be a few weeks away from Christmas and the Children will be practicing hard for the Nativity

Play. It's always a magical time for the children and hopefully over the next few weeks we can share with them both the fun of Christmas and the true message of Christmas.



We were sorry to lose Jean Robertson as our Children's Church Superintendent; she will be a hard act to follow. The children and adults of the Children's Church would want to say a huge thank you to Jean for her 67 years of service to the young people of Ardeer Church and we hope she is enjoying a well-earned rest.



During the past term the children have been hearing about many of the miracles of Jesus as well as stories like the Good Samaritan. They have enjoyed stories, crafts, colour ins, quizzes, games and songs. Hopefully, by coming to church they

feel part of the church family. We're always happy to see more children on a Sunday morning so please encourage any children you know to come along.



The Youth Group run by the 3 churches has restarted after the summer. It meets on the 3rd Sunday of the month with 3 nights in the High Kirk, 3 in Livingstone and 3 in Ardeer. Once again, the young people themselves have come up with some excellent ideas for the programme. As a result of the grant we received from North Ayrshire Council, 12 people attended a First Aid Course. Not only did this benefit the Youth Group but many of those involved in the Youth Group are also involved in BB, GB, Scouts, Children's Church, Summer Mission, Pantomime and wider church activities so it was money very well spent benefitting so many organisations. We were also able to buy some new equipment with the remainder of the NAC grant.

On the first night back, we had 3 new young people attending so numbers are healthy and hopefully going up. We have a busy programme each night with lots of games, challenges and crazy activities however each night there is also a time to stop and think of something deeper. The spiritual input takes many different forms to keep it fresh and interesting so we have had

discussions, talks, quizzes and You Tube videos which have put across a serious message in an interesting way.

We ask you to pray for the success of this Youth Group as we try to reach teenagers and young adults and keep them involved in the life of the church.



We have been very busy at 1st Stevenston Boys Brigade since the beginning of the new session. We have taken part in a number of Battalion competitions including chess where we won 6 medals, pool, bible knowledge and football.

Anchor boys are held on a Thursday from 6.15-7.15pm and is for primary 1-3. We have been learning to become secret agents, pirates and finding out about food banks. At our pirate party we learned to talk like a pirate, made pirate hats and had a treasure hunt to win gold coin. Lots of fun was had by all. We have a Disney theme night and Christmas party night still to come.

Juniors is on a Thursday from 7-8.15pm for primary 4-6. Juniors have been busy with their badgework and we have learned about, the ocean, pollution, healthy eating and recycling. We will also be learning about Remembrance Day and space. and a Christmas outing is planned.

Company section is from 8pm-9.30pm for P7 up. The Company section recently had a movie night, learned to make homemade bread, smoothies, learned about the church and the community and had a ready steady cook challenge night. They'll also be learning about Remembrance and will have their Christmas outing to see mother goose at the Pavilion Theatre Glasgow.

We have recently held a sponsored games night to raise funds and we have a Christmas shopping night. The Christmas shopping night will be held on Friday 22nd November at the High Kirk Hall Stevenston from 7pm-9pm. Tickets are £3 and this includes a tea or coffee and a mince pie. A great way to do your Christmas shopping with Darceys candles, Avon, wreaths, cards and home baking stalls and lots more.

We're also selling a Christmas quiz for £1 which can be purchased on a Thursday night or after the service on a Sunday. These should be returned by 28th November when the winner will be drawn.

Eileen McColgan, Captain.

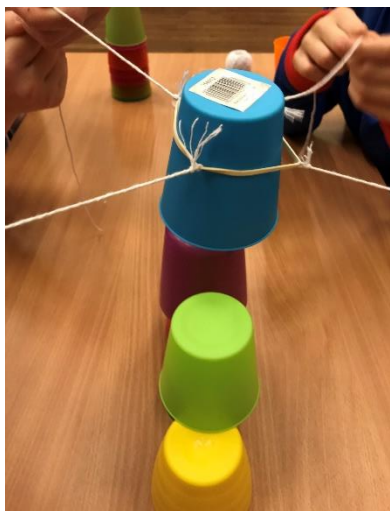
Visiting the Guides

I recently visited the guides with Dorothy Penno who was with me to tell the guides about the Christmas Fayre and to encourage them to get involved in it. We hope that some of the guides will be able to help out in the cafe, in the small hall, at the Fayre on the 23rd November. Dorothy showed them the white aprons she has made for them to wear and the girls seemed pleased to be

included. She also suggested they might try their hand at making a Christmas table decoration for the fayre and Joanna, the guide leader, said that if time allowed she would try to organise this for the guides.

As to the visit:

We were given a very warm welcome from the guides and their leaders. This session there are 22 guides on the roll with 17 present on the night. This was to be a challenge evening where the guides had a task to work out and complete. The role of a civil engineer was discussed and the site of the new build at Auchenharvie playing fields was referred to. The guides were given some balloons and sticky tape with the instruction to build a tower as tall as possible and to find out which group had built the tallest tower that remained upright. Their second task was to build another tower using plastic beakers but without touching them with their hands. They were also given some string and some rubber bands to help them with the task. It took the girls some time to come up with a strategy to move the beakers without touching but eventually using a type of lasso made from the string and rubber bands they managed to build their tower. This was a more difficult task than building the balloon tower but the guides did persevere and eventually managed to achieve their goal.



I asked Joanna how she had managed when our halls were unavailable recently. She replied that there was no problem as the guides were able to have their meetings in Ardeer church hall.

It was an interesting visit and without a doubt the team-building exercise with the balloons and the beakers was a different type of experience from what I had as a guide many moons ago.

Catherine Reid.

Robbie's Remanences

Little did I realise, when in the mid-20th century, I helped my father to re-plate batteries on the electric vans of Morrisons bakery (they were ahead of our "modern" times weren't they?) that one day I'd come to live in Stevenston. This came about because I got a post at Hunterston Power Station, having been at Braehead Power Station.

On coming to Ayrshire, we started to look for a home but those we fancied were too expensive and many were not attractive to us. However, a schoolfriend of Catherine, a surveyor, suggested we contact Isaac Cherry. We did this and he asked what we could afford and built a house for us for this amount.

Thus, in August 1964 we moved into our new home and started looking for a church. The first church we visited was Livingstone and, lo and behold, the Minister was an old schoolmate of mine who had also been in Paisley YMCA with me. There was then no doubt that we would join Livingstone.

After a few years I became a deacon and when Alex Milligan moved to Largs I became Clerk to the Deacons' Court. Subsequently when Bill Forsyth was no longer able, I became FWO convenor and was also made an elder.

I have enjoyed the wonderful friendship I have had in both the Church and the town and look forward to more years in both.

Robbie Burns.



Our Harvest will be their Christmas.



Thank you to everyone who donated to this year's Harvest Appeal for Blythwood Care. We have transported a total of 67 filled shoe boxes, many knitted items and £ 230 to the depot in Glasgow.

Blythswood Care will use our gifts wherever they are needed most to help vulnerable children, adults and families and transform lives around the world.

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. (Psalm 67:1,2)

Dorothy Hershaw.

Stevenston Community Development Trust

At the end of June, Brian Devlin, the Ardeer church resource worker, told me about an initiative being promoted by North Ayrshire Council. This was twofold, (a) the Council had a pot on money (£500,000) to plough into town centre projects within the Three Towns. They were seeking local community ideas on how to spend the sum on prior 31 March 2020 (b) Following on from this town centre development spend, the Council were encouraging a local Development Trust be formed within Stevenston to continue town development work.

Brian suggested that I express an interest under the auspices of Livingstone Parish Church. Debbie McMail being the Ardeer person. This being something of interest to me, I went along with Brian to the meeting. (There have been 3 or 4 ensuing meetings that I have attended on my own.)

Representatives and elected members of the Council stated that the Council could no longer afford to plough money into discreet projects, the money, over the coming years just will not be there for such past practice. There has been considerable and growing use of Development Trusts over the past ten years. These are legally set up Companies, that trade on a not for profit basis (Company Limited by Guarantee and not having Share Capital). The purpose is about citizens joining together to address local issues using self-help, trading for social purpose and ownership

of buildings and land to bring about long term social, economic and environmental community benefit.

Out of the meetings held so far, a planning group of Stevenston people have agreed to form a proper Company, the name being: Stevenston Community Development Trust. This is on the cusp of being registered and once done, will allow the work of the trust begin properly, through obtaining banking facilities and in a position to trade, employ people & volunteers on work that will develop Stevenston. Two practical events that have taken place are a litter clean-up of the car park opposite the Champion Shell pub and a Christmas 'pop up' shop that will be located in the Library mid-November to mid-December. There is another litter pick being organised for late November.

The aim of the Company is trade in service provision that is of benefit to the community. Secondly, in the fullness of time, from surpluses generated, disbursement to projects that aid town development should be feasible.

Membership of the Company is open to everyone who resides in the KA20 postcode. Members will have a vote on who to elect as Directors and a say on the nature of work the Company is or could be involved in.

So, this is a kind invitation to look out for, over the coming six months, this local initiative. The formal creation of the Company should be complete by Christmas and then news about it will follow. If of interest to you, apply to become a member.

The initiative is community based and we, as a church, are part of this community. As individuals, we can add to the desire to enhance our town and community, through engaging in varying degrees to both church and the development trust, even if only, telling someone about it.

Ken Gibson

Get Together Lunch

The Get Together Christmas Lunch will take place on Wednesday 4th December 2019 at 12 noon till 2pm, within Ardeer Parish Church Hall.



The Get Together Lunch will return the first Wednesday in February 5th 2020 and thereafter the first Wednesday of each Month. The Get Together Lunches are a chance for all in the community to come along meet together and have some lunch.



“Well Equipped Spaces in the Right Places”

A few weeks ago, Dorothy and I attended a conference in Stirling. The conference “Well Equipped Spaces in the Right Places” was organised by the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland and focused primarily on the role of The General Trustees and on future proofing the church and its buildings.

The day consisted of a number of presentations and round the table discussions and activities. What very quickly became apparent is that for the majority of congregations the condition and maintenance of their church buildings was a main concern, focus and financial outlay. Throughout the day we explored what we thought a “well equipped space” was and then we were asked to consider what we thought was a “right place” for that space.

As a follow up to this year’s General Assembly the General Trustees have enlisted the services of a company called Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS). We were given a presentation from a representative of this company. They have compiled an online questionnaire based around “Well Equipped Spaces in the Right Places”. We were asked to encourage elders to complete this exercise as completed returns will be correlated to provide the General Trustees with a basis on which to compile a submission for presentation to next year’s assembly. If the Assembly accepts the General Trustees’ submission, then that will be the basis on which the National Church will look to the future.

What became apparent throughout the day is that we are going to be faced with major changes. We were left in no doubt that the number of Presbyteries as well as the number of church buildings will need to be drastically reduced within a relatively short space of time.



We were also encouraged to have our Sessions and congregations draw up a Missional Statement that focuses on what we envisage we can do for our community as followers of Christ, rather than on what we do or don't do with our buildings. At the end of the day we were left in no doubt that changes will need to be made, not simply to church buildings and their locations, but to future proof the church for generations to come.

Sandy Hershaw



Views from the Pews



- † 11% of adults in Scotland often feel lonely and 38% feel lonely sometimes. - Mental Health Foundation
- † 22% of people in Scotland feel they don't have a strong sense of belonging in their local community. - Scottish Household Survey 2015
- † 8 out of 10 carers have felt lonely or socially isolated as a result of looking after a loved one. - Carers UK
- † 200,000 over 65-year-olds have not had a proper conversation with friends or family for a month. - Age UK

While I'm not sure exactly what should be done to combat these problems, I do feel that the church should be involved in helping to address these problems. Be it through the planning of events or further work on local outreach. Like most things, these require volunteers, money, organisation and time. Are we up for it?

Alan Kerr.



It is an uncomfortable fact that between that between a quarter and half a million older people will spend Christmas alone. While some may wish solitude that is not the same as isolation or loneliness. While large scale communal events would help, they require organisation and cooperation of multiple agencies. We should aim for less ambitious but more local and practical projects. A Christmas meal, perhaps even on Christmas morning; inviting an elderly neighbour to our homes: Funding gift boxes (cf. Blythswood) for local distribution. These types of activity need planning, organisation and volunteers so should be started in Springtime.

Anonymous.

Pastoral Care

It was an honour to be asked to take over Pastoral Care when Jim Wilson could no longer continue visiting members of the congregation. I consider it a privilege to be able to visit members of the congregation in their own homes. By doing this I have got to know a lot of interesting and wonderful people and to listen to their stories of their lives is fascinating. The thing I have to remember is that although we are living through troublesome times now, it is as nothing compared to loved ones going off to fight in a war or living through times of high unemployment with very little government help. We have to pray that those times never return.

One elderly lady I visited told me that she had spent her working life as a shop assistant in Saltcoats. One of her supervisors must have noticed that she had a very good eye for colour and design and asked her to help dress the shop window. She then became the person who did the window displays and ended up dressing the windows of one of the large stores in Glasgow. Having heard her story, I wanted her to write an article for the church magazine but she was too shy and unassuming to do it!

Another very interesting lady I met when she came to Livingstone Church regaled me with her stories about being a clipper on the Glasgow buses. She was fortunate to meet a lovely man who was her driver and after a short courtship, they married and went on to have four lovely daughters! One story she told me illustrated beautifully the Glasgow humour. A wee wifie came running up to the bus in the bus station and asked: "Where's the bus going?" It's got Larkhall on the front and Cambuslang on the side!" The clippy replied: "The bus goes frontywise, noo sideywise, so you work it oot!"



I visited a lovely elderly couple in Saltcoats. The husband had been in hospital and when I asked him about the care he had received in hospital, he said it was wonderful. The nurses especially were so considerate of all his needs. The nurse had asked him if he was feeling frisky? His wife looked at him and contradicted him saying: "She did not, she asked if you were thirsty!" We all had such a good laugh!

Anyone I visit, I find that whatever I give them, they give me even more back. We would love to share the delights of visiting with you and it would mean so much to so many.

God Bless You, Catherine Burns.

Visit to Orchard Road Presbyterian Church, Singapore

A number of you may know our son and family live in Singapore and we went out to visit them in September. We had a lovely time, essentially Monday – Friday, babysitting our grand-daughter, Eilidh.



One day, we visited the National Museum, mainly to see a jungle themed light/audio show that seemed to fascinate Eilidh. We came out of the even, cool air-conditioned environment into the humid 30° (Centigrade) that Singaporeans call normal. We were melting and needed to find somewhere fast to feed and change Eilidh. Two doors along was the Orchard Road Presbyterian Church and looking through the railings, we could see a shaded courtyard with bench tables. We both agreed, it would be suitable for a quick pit-stop and in we went and proceeded to tend to our feeding and changing duties. We had just got started, when a door opened and an elderly lady invited us inside to complete our baby pit-stop.

We accepted the invite and entered into an air-conditioned hall that had a group of ladies doing a bible study. The first thing that struck us was how similar the hall smelt to our own church hall despite the use of air-conditioning. It was a bit of home away from home. The ladies were very kind to us, plying us with tea/coffee and Eilidh was fed and changed in comfortable surroundings. On departing, the ladies invited us to come to Sunday service.

It was two weeks later before we took up this further invite. The church service (at nine o'clock a.m.) was well attended (approximately 500, accommodated in the church and a further 200 as overflow in the video linked hall). The service was mainstream Presbyterian format delivered by the deputy minister (Rev Dr Peter Poon), who in turn was assisted a worship leader (Deacon Chong Yit Peng). The sermon base was Galatians 6. All in all, an enjoyable service and were then introduced to the principal minister (Rev Dr Clive Chin) who proudly told us about the Victorian Scottish settlers and servicemen who founded the church. He encouraged us to go through to the hall for simple meal and cup of tea/coffee and then asked us to send his and his congregation's best wishes to our own congregations.

The meal I chose, was a delightful dish, deep fried chicken skins, steamed sausage stuffed brussell sprouts (about the size of a large plum) and noodles. Susan stuck to tea and biscuits. There wasn't too much time to linger as whilst we were having our meal and chatting to churchgoers, the hall was in the process of being set up for what was to follow, successively Chinese, German & Indonesian language services, finished off by an English language evening service.

An uplifting service and a gentle reminder, that the church is a worldwide thing. The congregation was about 90% Singaporean (Chinese) and those we spoke with, were very aware and appreciative of the church's Scottish roots and Presbyterian traditions.

Susan & Ken Gibson

Quiz Corner



All answers will be made available in the next issue.

Nativity Questions

1. In which gospel do we read of the coming of the magi?
2. What was the name of John the Baptists father?
3. Who was governor of Syria when Mary and Joseph set out for Bethlehem?
4. Who said: 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace . . .'?
5. Complete the following words of the angels after the birth of Jesus: 'Glory to God in the highest . . .'

Bonus Question:

How many animals are mentioned in the Bible as being present at the Nativity?

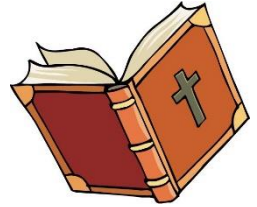
Answers for Quiz Corner – September

Old Testament Questions

1. Absalom's hair got caught in a tree and Joab thrust three spears into his heart. (2 Samuel 18:95)
2. Joshua succeeded Moses. (Deuteronomy 31:1-8)
3. Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah. (1 Kings 19:1-2)
4. Isaiah. (Isaiah 55:2)

New Testament Questions – Multiple Choice

1. a) Philippians
2. b) Silas (Acts 15:40, 18:22)
3. a) One
4. c) The head of John the Baptist. (Mark 6:17-29)



Wise Words

1. 2 books end in the letter 'k'. Habakkuk and Mark.
2. 7 men were appointed to distribute bread. (Acts 6:1-6)
3. Jesus turned 6 jars of water into wine. (John 2:6)

Church Diary

Sun. 1st December

Ardeer	10.00
Livingstone	11.30
Three Towns Care Home	15.00

Communion Sunday

Carol Service

Wed. 4th December

Thistle Day Care Centre	14.00
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Sun. 8th December

Ardeer	10.00
Livingstone	11.30
Bonnie Lesley Court	15.00

Gift Service

Carol Service

Sun. 15th December

St. Johns	19.00
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Unity Carol Service

Tue. 17th December

Ardeer	19.00
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Service of Quiet

Sun. 22nd December

Ardeer	10.00
Livingstone	11.30

Nativity Service

Christmas Eve

Ardeer	19.00
Livingstone	23.15

Watchnight Service

Christmas Day

Ardeer	10.30
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Christmas Service

Sun. 29th December

Ardeer	10.30
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Joint Service





**Stevenston:
Ardeer Parish Church**

**We celebrate the Sacrament of
Holy Communion at 10.00am on
Sunday 1st December 2019.
Please join us in fellowship and
worship.**



**Livingstone
Parish Church**

**We celebrate the Sacrament of
the Lord's Supper
at 11.30am on
Sunday 1st December 2019.
Please join us in
fellowship and worship.**



Stevenston Ardeer Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC015397.

Stevenston Livingstone Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC000452.