

FOCUS

Christmas 2015



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all readers of Focus from Cairngryffe and Symington and Libberton & Quothquan Kirks.

Kirk and Community News
For the Churches in Tinto Parishes

Church of Scotland

The Tinto Parishes
(Cairngryffe and Symington with Libberton & Quothquan Parish Churches)
Minister : – Rev George C. Shand MA BD
 (01899 309400)

Session Clerks:

Cairngryffe - Mr Jack Meikle Glenbow Cottage, Thankerton (01899 308397)
 Symington - Mr Ross Russell Spindrift, Main Street, Symington (01899 308240)
 Libberton & Quothquan – Mrs Liliias Nicholls The Larches, Biggar Road,

Libberton, Carnwath ML11 8LX (01555 840572)

SUNDAY SERVICES

December 2015

11.00am Cairngryffe 11.00am Symington 9.30am Libberton
 January, February, March 2016 - See table on page 3

Christmas and New Year Services – *Everybody Welcome!*

CHRISTMAS FAMILY SERVICES

Thursday 24th Family Service at Symington at 7 pm.
 Watchnight Service at Cairngryffe at 11.15pm.

Watchnight Service at Libberton at 11.15pm.
Christmas day service at Libberton at 10.30am

UNITED YEAR'S END SERVICE

United year end Service 27th December at Symington 11am
 United New Year Service 3rd January at Cairngryffe 11am

MERRY MINCE PIES

Remember to pop into Symington Church Hall after the evening service on Christmas Eve for mince pies, coffee and a chat with your friends.

Communion Services

Sunday March 6th 2016 9.30am (Symington), 11.00am (Cairngryffe)
 Sunday March 13th 2016 11.00m (Libberton & Quothquan)

Joint Office Bearers Conference Feb 22nd 2016 at Cairngryffe at 7.30pm

Elders Service March 20th 2016 at Libberton Kirk 7.00pm

Songs of Praise (Theme – Renewal) Sunday 21st February 2016 at Symington 7.00pm

Service times for the next 4 months

Date	Symington	Cairngryffe	Libberton
Dec 6th	11am M	11am O	0930 M
Dec 13th	11am O	11am M	0930 M
Dec 20th	11am M	11am O	0930 M
Dec 25th	No service	No service	1030 Joint

Dec 27th	11am Joint	No service	No service
Jan 3rd 2016	No service	11am Joint	No service
Jan 10th	0930 M	11am M	11am O
Jan 17th	0930 M	11am O	11am M
Jan 24th	0930 M	11am M	11am O
Jan 31st	0930 M	11am O	11am M
Feb 7th	0930 M	11am M	11am O
Feb 14th	0930 M	11am O	11am M
Feb 21st	0930 M	11am M	11am O
Feb 28th	0930 M	11am O	11am M
Mar 6th	0930 M com	11am M com	11am O
Mar 13th	0930 M	11am O	11am M com
Mar 20th	No service Palm Sunday	No Service Palm Sunday	11am Joint all age Service
Mar 27th	0930 M Easter	11am O Easter	11am M Easter
Apr 3rd	11am Joint	No service	No service
Apr 10th	11am M	0930 M	11am O
Apr 17th	11am O	0930 M	11am M

com = Communion, . Easter = Easter Sunday,
Each Session to make own arrangements

M = Minister. O =

Visit our websites at



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

Dear Friends,

THE SEASON THAT CHANGES YOU.

On the radio recently I heard an old Dolly Parton love song that was described as 'Bluegrass'. That is a branch of Country Music that has its roots in the folk music of Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales, combined, as the announcer said, with 'the dew of the Appalachian mountains' to make 'a high lonesome sound.' I can't remember any of the verses, but some of the words of the chorus intrigued me, *"Like the weather your heart changesI still wonder why each season changes you."*

I can see that. Some of us, in summer, are in our element. Some of us, in a prolonged winter, start to feel exhausted and low – SAD – Seasonal Affective Disorder – and long for the light to return. Some of us find the autumn season such a healing time. I commented on that in my introductory words to the Cairngryffe Church 2016 Calendar when I said, "Sometimes when we go back inside after being out in the bright light of the sun, everything seems very dark, and we have to wait till our eyes adjust. What a fascinating instrument the human eye is, that it can adapt to make the most of different quantities of light. And also that it can respond to 'quality of light'.

One of the reasons I like the autumn light so much is because as I look around at our delightful landscape I feel that just looking is like a 'balm to my eyes'. Those of us with sight are very fortunate indeed."

As we again begin the cycle of the annual Christian Calendar starting with Advent, and the days get shorter and the nights longer, we enter a season that is so often associated with light – decorations, trees, candles, and a star. And it is indeed a season that 'changes us'. A time of new beginnings when the marvellous news is announced of a child, unique in all history, born to us – when each of us receives a special gift of love from God, starting with the journey of a group of people in one specific area of the world, and holding a message important for all of humanity – that God is gracious love, and we should hold our gracious God at the centre of our being, trust our God, and serve our God in our daily lives and in our care for other people.

All our worship over Advent and Christmas is designed to help us celebrate the truth of God's love, and that God-is-with-us.

BLUE CHRISTMAS.

Red and white and green are traditional Christmas colours. Silver and Gold often appear as the main colours on Christmas trees in Church. But blue? Blue as in 'I am feeling blue'?

More and more in our churches we are recognising that many people in our congregations and communities are dealing with loss at a time when the prevailing culture expects us to all be cheery and jovial and in party mood. It could be anything - the loss of a loved one, the loss of a relationship, or a job, or a profound change in our life or our health. It could be a question mark over the future. It can certainly be very difficult when in the midst of general celebration we can feel even more alone.

We need to be more attentive to the needs of people whose Christmas colours include 'blue'. Many Churches now offer a 'Blue Christmas' reflective time of worship – a sacred space that accepts where we actually are, and holds out healing and hope – a space for those who experience 'blue', and for those who want to show worshipful concern for those in our churches and community experiencing 'blue'.

Often this time of worship is held on or close to the Winter Solstice (the longest night of the year) – the day of least light.

This year in Tinto Parishes the theme of our December Prayer and Praise Service on Monday 21st December (the day before the Winter Solstice) at 7.30pm in Libberton & Quothquan Parish Church will be 'Blue Christmas' - a reflective service for those who know 'blue', and those who want to support others through prayer. As usual, everyone will be most welcome.

With best wishes to you all, this Christmas season,

Your minister and friend,

George

SOME WORSHIP INITIATIVES

THE JESSE TREE.

As we begin our journey through Advent, one of the things we will be introducing at the 9.30 service is a 'Jesse Tree'. This is a very old Christmas tradition that dates back to medieval times, and is showing new popularity. It is a visual way of telling the story of the Bible from Creation right up to the birth of Christ. Some Churches use a small tree, others a branch. This year we will have a felt representation of a tree onto which we hang Bible story decorations every Sunday.

Who is the 'Jesse' in Jesse Tree? Jesse was the father of King David and there are prophetic words in the book of Isaiah that say, "*A shoot will come up from the stock of Jesse; and a branch will grow out from his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord...with righteousness he will judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.*" Isaiah 11.

'...a branch will grow from his roots'. A sign of new life and of new beginnings. For us as Christians, Jesus is that new beginning, the Christ of the line of David.

When the idea of a Jesse Tree began all those years ago, it was as large carvings, or large tapestries – even sometimes as stained glass windows. This was at a time when the majority of the worshipping community were illiterate, and the pictures helped people remember the Bible story from Creation up to Christmas. Nowadays it is

a colourful way to see Jesus in the context of the whole of Scripture, as we prepare for the coming of the Christ. And we will surround the tree picture with prayers – written by members of the congregation on paper ‘leaves’ - prayers this Christmastime for ‘things money cannot buy’.

PALM SUNDAY.

It is often a real disappointment to members of our congregations that we have lost the sense of occasion that was once associated with Palm Sunday. Sunday schools now number in their two’s or three’s so cannot recreate processions.

For Palm Sunday, 20th March 2016, we have agreed an experiment. On that day we will hold a Joint Family Service, at 11.00am, held in Libberton and Quothquan Church, when, together in all-age worship, we will try to find ways to bring back that sense of occasion and celebration. Do remember that date in your diary.

Symington Church – Financial Campaign

At the end of last year the congregation of Symington Kirk found itself in a position where it had been using financial reserves to pay its costs, and income from giving was insufficient to keep the church going. As a result the Kirk Board recognised that, however much we didn’t want to undertake a financial campaign, we needed to do so or start thinking of closing the doors after 300 years.

So it was, that throughout the first half of 2015 with the help of Edith Scott from 121 George St, we undertook a phased campaign among our members. We sought to explain the work of the Church and how the congregation in Symington is part of a wider Christian movement with financial responsibilities beyond paying for part of a Minister and the building at the end of Kirk Bauk.

A series of leaflets touching on aspects of the churches work, were dropped through members doors and, late in May, members were invited to consider their giving and to come along to a Gathering in the church hall in mid-June. Reactions varied. Some recognised immediately that although perhaps not in a position to increase their giving, simply filling in a gift aid form would enable the church to recover the tax paid on the donated amount. Others significantly increased their contribution, perhaps after several years of not having done so. Changes in method of giving such as establishing a standing order, or changing from plate giving to envelop giving were also encouraged.

The Gathering, in mid-June turned into a very pleasant evening with a good meal, plenty of chat and a presentation with questions and answers concerning our finances. All in a very congenial atmosphere.

The campaign was hard work. It involved a lot of people all of whom are sincerely thanked for their efforts. To all who responded positively, the Board is also grateful. The outcome has been an increase in income of nearly 20% which, our Treasurer tells us, should be sufficient to meet our immediate needs and provides a solid foundation for our work and commitments over the next couple of years."

There is a perception among some that the church is always looking for money. Well of course it is. Look around at the needs of the world and ask yourself who, if not Christ’s people, should be doing something to help. Each of us when we became members promised to give a fitting portion of our time, talents and money to the work of our church. If our church is to continue to fulfil its mission it needs its members to offer support and to contribute. Locally, we may not need to ask for more money for a little while. However, when we do, we all need to be prepared to recognise the responsibility of the promise we made.

Alec Taylor, Clerk to Congregational Board

HYMN PAGE – A COURAGEOUS HYMN

The King of Love my Shepherd is. (HYMN 462).

This all-time favourite hymn was written by Henry William Baker and first published in 1868, when he was 47 years old. He was editor in chief of ‘Hymns Ancient and Modern’ at the time, and introduced the hymn into an appendix. It did not seem appropriate to include it in the main body of the Hymnbook because it was too ‘modern’.

It is a courageous hymn, written at a time when it was deemed inappropriate to ‘meddle’ with scripture, especially the Psalms. Baker uses imagery from Psalm 23, alongside New Testament imagery, to make it a Christian song. Although it begins and ends with the Shepherd imagery of the Psalm, it also draws on the Gospel of John’s vision of shepherd and sheep – a two way relationship through Christ – and ends with the ‘Good Shepherd’. And where the Psalm speaks of ‘still waters’, he uses ‘streams of living water’.

So, it was a hymn very much ahead of its time, but one whose popularity is now international.

A tune was specially composed for it by John Bacchus Dykes – the tune we are most familiar with - called 'Dominus Regit Me' (Latin for the first words of the Psalm). John Dykes was quite influential at the time in hymn music. He was the son of a Vicar in Hull, and, at the age of 10, became the assistant organist in St. John's Church in Hull. His clerical career was mostly in the Durham area, including some time as Canon and precentor of the Cathedral.

However, for copyright reasons, this tune had to be dropped in the 1906 version of the Hymnbook, and the musical editor Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) turned to an Irish folk tune he had recently heard, called St. Columba. He amended the tune from Common Metre to 8787, and it became St. Columba (Irish). Interestingly, around the world, as many people sing the hymn to this tune as do to the John Dykes tune we know best.

"Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me. And on His shoulder gently laid, and home, rejoicing, brought me."



TINTO PARISHES FACEBOOK PAGE.

We are currently piloting a Tinto Parishes Facebook page, and it can be found at www.facebook.com/tintoparishes. The last entry on it was a group of pictures from the In-Service Day Club we held in early November, and you can clearly see how much the youngsters enjoyed it. We hope to attract more pictures onto the page – especially of our Christmas celebrations. Do have a look, if you have access to Facebook, and do give some feedback....and 'Like' the page, of course, so you continue to see it.

And if you are interested in photography and want to share some of your pictures of Tinto Parishes events, then please get in contact with Rev. George so we can arrange this. Most recent statistics are that one in three Churches now operate a Facebook page, so perhaps our Pilot page might become a useful resource for some of us.

PRESBYTERY REPORT

Mrs Anna Lumsden has been installed as Moderator of Lanark Presbytery for the session 2015/16,

Pamela Strachan OLM in Melrose and Peebles Presbytery has been appointed as Chaplain to State Hospital, Carstairs.

Mrs Elizabeth Leckie, Reader in the Presbytery of Hamilton, as been appointed as locum in the charge of Coalburn linked with Lesmahagow Old for an initial period of 6 months.

Mr Bill Love has been appointed as Interim Moderator in Lanark Greyfriars from 24th October 2015.

Mrs Libby Muir has been appointed as Interim Moderator at Law Parish Church as from 3rd November 2015.

Rev Elizabeth Clelland has been appointed as Interim Moderator at Carnwath lw Carstairs as from 3rd November 2015.

Rev Dr John McPake from Hamilton Presbytery has been appointed as a Presbytery Assessor in terms of Act V, 2001 and as Interim Moderator at Kirkmuirhill Parish Church as from 3rd November 2015.

An application has been made for the refurbishment of St. Mary's Church Hall, Biggar at a cost of around £150,000.

Carluke: Kirkton has applied for approval to repair their pipe organ at a cost of £25,200 +VAT

Biggar Parish Church is to install a projector system at a cost of £9,720.

Black Mount Parish Church is to release £10,400 from their holdings in the consolidated fabric fund for replacement windows in the church hall.

Carluke: St. John's Parish Church to install a new kitchen in the manse.

Greyfriars Church Lanark is to update its sound system at a cost of £7,385 including VAT.

Greyfriars Church Lanark is to upgrade its heating system at a cost of £10,000.

Mr David Waters, Kirkmuirhill, spoke of the successful Summer Club run by Kirkmuirhill Church. Each day of the club saw attendance of 60 young people.

A service of closure of the church building in Rigsidie took place on 30th August 2015; gives thanks for the many generations of worship and witness that took place from the building; and prays for a fruitful continuation of ministry and mission within the community of Rigsidie from The Douglas Valley Church.

Rev Dr Nikki Macdonald, Upper Clyde Parish Church, informed the Presbytery that the old manse in Crawford had sold for above the asking price and also that a community choir 'Junction 13' had been set up in the parish, holding a successful concert in Crawfordjohn on 3rd October.

Kirkmuirhill has approved the change from seeking a Transition minister to seeking an Interim Minister in the charge of Kirkmuirhill.

The charge of Upper Clyde is now a full time post, utilising the 0.2 FTE allowance granted by the Ministries Council.

Congregations are asked to note that 31 October is the deadline for volunteers undertaking Regulated Work with children and protected adults to be PVG Scheme members. Safeguarding Training events were arranged. Kirk Sessions are at liberty to appoint more than one Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

Ruth Donaldson of Christian Solidarity Worldwide has been invited to speak at this year's World Mission Rally.

The Tinto Parishes and Presbytery were represented at the Panel of Review and Reform conference to outline the procedure for all applications for the Path of Renewal project on Saturday 19th September 2015

The Rev Dr Russell Barr, minister of Cramond Kirk, Edinburgh has been chosen as Moderator Designate of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 2016

The Presbytery received a presentation from David Bradwell, Church and Society Council on the 10,000 Voices for Change project. Mr Bradwell outlined the project and spoke of the desire of the Council to hear from as many people as possible on the concept of a fairer Scotland.

Mr Denham MacDougall has completed training to enable him to act as Interim Moderator and that he will shadow Rev George Shand to gain experience for a period of six months.

The Kirk Sessions of Lanark: St. Nicholas and The Douglas Valley Church have agreed to depart from the Church's practice in relation to human sexuality in order for applications for the current vacancy to be considered from, amongst others, individuals who are in a civil partnership.'

Arrangements have been made for the winding up of the funds for the Diaconate Project to redistribute the sum of £1162.14 to the participating congregations on a proportional basis.

The induction of Rev Dr Elijah Obinna to Carluke: St. Andrew's in deferred union with Carluke: St. John's (although initially to St. John's) will take place on 11th February 2016 in St. John's Church.

A Presbytery Gathering is to be held on Tuesday 16 Feb, 7pm, at Braehead House - replacing committee meetings for the evening.

Biggar Kirk have been fortunate to arrange for Professor Tom McLeish (Lecturer in Physics at Durham University) to give a lecture on this topic in Biggar High School on Thursday 3rd March 2016. Professor McLeish is a theoretical physicist and a Fellow of the Royal Society who has published work on this subject.

Robert Carson (Presbytery Elder, Symington).

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CAIRNGRYFFE

Deaths – Alexander S. Lamb on 6th October

We met with our other two churches in September to agree all our Christmas Services. We have 3 joint morning services at that time of year. We always try to share these services as fairly as possible with our companions who are part of our Tinto Parishes team. The services are Christmas day at Libberton Church, end of year at Symington and a New Year one at Cairngryffe. Full details are on Page 3

We also have three Services arranged for Christmas Eve, a family one at Symington at 7pm and a Watchnight one at Libberton and a Watchnight one at Cairngryffe at 11.15 pm. We all hope you can start your Christmas by attending one of these services. I always find that I enjoy starting my Christmas day at our Watchnight Service when the church bells ring at midnight and we light the white candle and wish each other a Merry Christmas. . I can then thank God once again for allowing me to share another Christmas with my family and friends.

We again have a Cairngryffe church calendar for 2016, this time it is showing the wildlife in and around our parishes. Please make sure you see one and if you want a copy they are priced at £5 each.

Our worship team will continue to do our morning services on every alternate Sunday during January February and March apart from Joint ones. This is only possible due to the excellent help I get from the members of our team. Thank you all very much I appreciate the work you do and the feedback I get from the congregation shows they also enjoy our services.

Finally I would like to thank all who contributed to our retiring collection for St Andrews Hospice refurbishment at Cairngryffe on Sunday 29th Nov which raised £150.

Jack Meikle. Session Clerk at Cairngryffe

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SYMINGTON

Goodbye-

With their decision to move from Symington to Lanark we say farewell to Jim and Jessie Rodger, The Logan, Townfoot. We will miss them very much and we wish them every happiness in their new home.

Welcome-

We welcome to the congregation, William Percy, Mill Road, Thankerton.

Baptism

On 18 October, 2015, Ethan Campbell Percy, son of Mr Mrs William Percy, Mill Road, Thankerton was baptised by Rev Jim Cutler.

Long service

At the Service of Remembrance on Sunday 8 November, Long Service Certificates were presented to Donald MacKenzie and Ross Russell – 43 years as elders, Robert Carson, 35 years as elder, Jim Morton, 32 years as elder and Gaynor Russell, 40 years as organist. The Rev George Shand, in presenting the certificates expressed the gratitude of the congregation for their commitment and dedication to Symington Kirk.

Choir

The choir will present an evening of Musical Entertainment in the church on WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER at 7-30pm followed by wine and canapes in the church hall. Tickets are available from any choir members or by phone at 01899 308240.

Ross Russell, Session Clerk at Symington

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LIBBERTON & QUOTHQUAN

December already and Advent is in full swing. At L and Q our families with young children or young adults lead the Liturgy and light a new candle each week culminating on Christmas Eve with the lighting of the Christmas candle.

The Sunday School are practising our Nativity called "Whoops – a- Daisy Angel" which is the story with song about a little, rather disorganised angel who is always making mistakes. A slight shortage of children means that the shepherd has to double up as Joseph and the angels need to double up as snowflakes! Undaunted, we will perform this delightful piece on Sunday 20th. The 20th. is also "Christingle" Sunday so it's going to be a busy and wonderful hour!

There will be a Prayer and Praise Service on Monday 21st and the theme is “ Blue Christmas” . It’s L and Q’s turn and it is at 7.30. Our Christmas Eve Service starts around 11.15 pm bringing in Christmas Day with Rev. George and we host the joint Christmas Day Service at 10.30 am. What better way to start this special day! As always we will be offering sherry, mince pies and shortbread after both these services.

Our Ceilidh on the 27th November was a fun night with Charlie and Fiona providing great music and the ladies from L and Q producing tasty nibbles. We raised over £500 for “A Place at the Table” – a truly remarkable sum of money.

Best wishes for a peaceful and healthy Christmas.

Lilias Nicholls, Session Clerk at L and Q

THE GUILD

Symington Guild

Our September meeting was chaired by Margo Leadbitter. Biggar 50 yrs ago. He moved back to this area several



She welcomed Peter Mitchell who gave a very interesting talk on his time as a Police Officer in years ago when he retired.

In November we joined with Cairngryffe Guild at Officer. He passed on advice about keeping safe in the tea served by the Cairngryffe ladies.

Thankerton. The speaker was Constable David Wesencraft, Clydesdale Community Safety home and encouraged us to report Rural Crime. The evening was rounded off with a lovely

Please note that the December meeting will be on

Wednesday 9th instead of Thursday the 10th.

The Kirk Choir are doing a Christmas Concert to be held in the Church at 7.30pm. Tea well be served in the Church Hall afterwards Tickets are £7.00 and can be obtained from Choir Members.

Contact Helen Anderson 308598 or Martha Cowan 308657.

CAIRNGRYFFE EVERYOUNG CLUB

On **December 10th** members will enjoy a hearty **Christmas Lunch at Cornhill House Hotel** (12.30pm for 1.00pm).

The fun doesn’t end there as the fortnightly meetings in Thankerton Village Hall at 2.00pm resume on :-

- 14th Jan 2016 Orkney - Jack Meikle
- 28th Jan 2016 Burns Supper with guests, Carnwath Evergreen & entertainers
- 11th Feb 2016 The Daggengham (Becontree) Housing Estate Centenary Mural – Chad McCail
- 25th Feb 2016 Confessions of a Wedding Planner at Tinto Hotel – Sadie Campbell
- 10th Mar 2016 New Beginnings – Mary McLellan
- 24th Mar 2016 The Development of the guitar in folk Music – Denham Macdougall

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

FLOWER LISTS

SUNDAY	CAIRNGRYFFE	SYMINGTON
6 th December 2015	Lily Borthwick	Linda McKay

13 th December 2015	Sandra Stewart	Muriel Knight
20 st December 2015	Christmas Flowers	Janette Hope
27 th December 2015	Christmas Flowers	Christmas
3 rd January 2016	Christmas Flowers	No Service
10 th January 2016	Christmas Flowers	Jessie Duff
17 th January 2016	Warnock Girls	Flower Fund
24 th January 2016	Flora Ireland	Liz Short
31 st January 2016	Dorothy Scott	Noreen Johnston
7 th February 2016	Margaret Edge	Hazel Howat
14 th February 2016	Nancy Nicholl	Rena Mitchell
21 st February 2016	Sadie Campbell	Margaret Cleland
28 th February 2016	Maureen Bannatyne	Sheena Carlyle
6 th March 2016	Cathryn Forrest (C)	Ella Hodge
13 th March 2016	Annie Callan	Etta Prentice
20 th March 2016	Margaret Smith	Marlyn Masterton
27 th March 2016	Barbara Miller	Mary Hodge

**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:

10th January 2016 11am New Term begins

Sunday 7th February Holiday.

Easter Sunday 27th March, End of Term.

Summer Term starts Sunday 24th April.

For further information please contact **Rosmairi J Galloway 01555 880779**.

SundayZone @ Symington

We are operating on a monthly basis at the moment as we do not have the leaders to do every Sunday.

The children are still very welcome in Church every Sunday and there are materials to keep them occupied if the sermon does not hold their attention.

The are also preparing a special service of readings and carols for 20th December and we would be delighted to see as many as possible in Church on that day.

The Minister will also be doing the Christingle that day.

If you don't know what Christingle is, come along and find out.

We wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year in 2016

For further information please contact Jessie Duff on 308365

FROM OUR KIRK TREASURERS

Libberton & Quothquan Treasurer's Report

Income and expenditure in 2015 were as budgeted for and there will be a small surplus in current expenditure even after expenditure on maintaining the fabric of the church ie improved heating and sound systems, internal paintwork, upgrading the older electric wiring and buying a new portable organ. This has been achieved through the continued generosity and faithfulness of a small but dedicated congregation which always willingly gives of its time and talents not only for the benefit of Libberton and Quothquan church but of the wider world. We have sent £850 to "A Place at the Table" charity to help Syrian refugees, especially traumatised children, £230 to the "Jayyous Future Generations Crèche" which is an educational charity brought to our attention by our minister, £150 to Christian Aid and £50 to the Saint Andrew's Hospice appeal. Not forgetting the regular contributions to "New Beginnings" and the annual "Shoe Box Appeal" There was one unexpected item of expenditure which we couldn't meet from regular giving and that was a £4,000 bill to stop water penetration of the church spire which had to be paid for from our reserves. It is one of the consequences of a small congregation that it is difficult to aim for a sizeable annual budget surplus to increase reserves but we are in a fortunate position in having a reasonable reserve fund to meet such emergencies.

I can identify one item of increased expenditure for 2016 which is an extra £900 to Ministry and Mission but with inflation expected to remain low in 2016 and assuming the same level of giving, I expect to balance recurring income and expenditure in 2016.

M.G. Stobo, Treasurer

Symington Church - Treasurer's Report

Income to October 2015		Expenditure to October 2015	
Plate Offering	£2,727	Ministry & Mission	£17,250
Standing Orders	£16,427	Minister's Travel & Locum	£753
Weekly Envelopes	£3,842	Staff Costs	£5,147
Other Income	£2,521	Joint Cong Costs	£527
Gift Aid Tax Refund	£6,071	Heating & Lighting	£1,352
Scottish Gas Refund (electricity overpaid to 2014)		Insc Church & Manse	£1,391
	£3,119	Fabric Maintenance	£863
		Other Costs *	£876
		Holiday Club	£92
		New NRSV Bibles	£764
TOTAL INCOME	£34,707	TOTAL EXPEND	£29,015
		Surplus Y-t-D	£5,692

* includes costs associated with Stewardship Campaign

J Eric Carlyle, Treasurer



Cairngryffe Church – Treasurer's Report

Income to November 2015		Expenditure to November 2015	
Offering	£16,566	Church of Scotland	£13,437
Tax Back (2014)	4,163	Travel Expenses	567
Donations	390	Joint Cong Account	1,720
Deconate Project refund	185	Salaries	2,931
Tea Committee	580	Presbytery Dues	412
		Fabric Maintenance	600
		Miscellaneous	437
Total Income	£21,884	Total Expenditure	£20,104
		Surplus y-t-d	£1,780

We should end the year with a modest surplus based on the above.

Linzi Struthers, Treasurer

NEW BEGINNINGS

At a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees it was unanimously agreed that the Clydesdale Furniture project would cease its operation by end December 2015.

Currently we have a very good team managing this part of the project, however the decision has been taken purely from a financial position. Due to the substantial decrease in the level of financial donations and the fact that the cost of operating the FI is £8-10,000 p.a. we can no longer sustain this part of our project.

During the life of this project we have helped just short of 500 clients, providing them with a high level of household furniture for their new homes.

We will continue with the original part of the project, however, the Starter Packs, Wellbeing Packs, Household Hygiene Packs, Childrens' Activity Packs and Baby Packs.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported the furniture initiative thus far and we would hope that you will continue to support New Beginnings in the future.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and healthy 2016.

Mary M McLellan

St Andrew's Hospice Appeal.

On 29th November each of our congregations held a retiral collection on behalf of St Andrew's Hospice Capital Appeal. Together we raised £350 for this worthwhile cause.

The Hospice has been in existence since 1986 and it is just starting a major long-term fundraising campaign to raise in the region of £9 Million for necessary refurbishment that will include creating more single occupancy rooms and restructuring within the building to enable more modern approaches and equipment. It currently has 20 care beds, 2 additional for elderly or young people who are chronically sick, and 60 day care places a week. The fundraising will, they say, see the Hospice 'fit for the future'.

The Hospice has reached out to all the churches in the area as part of their initial fundraising, and the Presbytery of Lanark was happy to commend this initiative to all the churches in our area.

A number of members of our congregation have cause to be grateful to the Hospice for the quality of its care of members of their family, and some of us already support the Hospice in other ways. In our area they work in a partnership project with other organisations called 'Reshaping care for older people', which supports people in their own homes.

SUNDAY CLANGERS

Earlier this year, George's order of service encouraged the Libberton and Quothquan congregation to sing the hymn 550 – 'as the deep pants for the water'. Obviously, it should have been 'deer', but in the winter weather that is approaching, deep and comfy can be very important.

Others who heard about this circulated other 'Sunday Clangers' from Orders of Service. In many cases it was the Auto-correct facility that was the culprit – the computer automatically making changes and the writer not noticing. These are some of the less obvious ones:

"his first avowed intent, to be a penguin"

"Chris is made the sure foundation"

"sheep may softly glaze"

"and give us we pray, your peach in our hearts Lord, at the end of the day."

"Sin to the Lord with all your heart"

"..to save us from Santa's power."

And this, not a mistake, but a lovely play on the words out of context – a quote from the Authorised Version (KJV) of I Corinthians 15:51, on a noticeboard in the room where the Church crèche is held: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

Editor's Note

Thank you to all contributors who provided the information contained in this newsletter.

The Spring edition of FOCUS will be issued late in February 2016.

Contributions from both village and church organisations and groups, covering the period from March 2016 to the end of May 2016 should be sent to me by **Sunday 7th February 2016 at the latest.**

I can be reached at: - Charlie Todd, 63 Station Road, Thankerton, ML12 6NZ Tel: 01899 308327 or by email at kandctodd@gmail.com

WAR DEAD OF CARMICHAEL, PETTINAIN & COVINGTON/THANKERTON 1914-1919

1914

12/11/1914 7567 Guardsman Henry DARGIE 1st Battalion Scots Guards

1915

11/03/1915 928 Engine Artificer James MILLER Royal Navy

19/07/1915 8158 Private John TERVIT 8th Battalion Highland Light Infantry

25/09/1915 S/16354 Private John POTTER - 2nd Battalion A & S Highlanders

27/09/1915 11160 Private John FARRELL 1st Battalion Cameronians/Scottish Rifles

1916

14/07/1916 S/20791 Private Thomas THOMSON - 5th Battalion Cameron Highlanders

22/07/1916 17647 Rifleman William BARRIE - 10th Battalion Cameronians/Scottish Rifles

03/09/1916 S/14392 Private Patrick TWEEDIE 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders

1917

04/04/1917 40925 Private Andrew K.H. MILLER - 9th Battalion Cameronians/SRs
28/04/1917 30571 Private John NEIL 2nd Battalion Highland Light Infantry
03/05/1917 1852 Trooper William G. MARSHALL Household Battalion*
27/05/1917 332364 Private Adam D. FRAME (twin) Highland Light Infantry 9th Battalion
27/05/1917 332364 Private James D. FRAME (twin) Highland Light Infantry 9th Battalion
31/05/1917 S/23295 Private William MILLAR 5th Battalion Cameron Highlanders
14/07/1917 95859 Gunner/Signaller Robert CROSBIE - Royal Garrison Artillery
31/07/1917 S/16437 Private William McLAUCHLAN 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders
26/10/1917 CH/1154 (S) Private Patrick MORAN Royal Naval Division
25/11/1917 12960 Guardsman James GRAY Scots Guards 2nd Battalion

1918

25/02/1918 122206 Private William McMORRAN Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)
22/03/1918 39569 Private Thomas SIMPSON - 10/11th Battalion Highland Light Infantry
23/03/1918 Lieutenant James McD BROWN 3rd Rifle Brigade (Prince Consorts Own)
05/05/1918 Captain Guy S. P. MacMEEKIN M.C. - 12th Battalion Royal Scots
27/05/1918 Second Lieutenant James MacMEEKIN - 5th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers
03/07/1918 Second Lieutenant William A. HUNTER - Royal Air Force
16/10/1918 Second Lieutenant Andrew PRENTICE - Royal Air Force
16/11/1918 132431 Driver William ADAMSON Royal Field Artillery
10/03/1919 148684 Air Mechanic 1st Class Thomas INGLIS Royal Air Force

Prayer Page

Again this year, near the end of Advent, we will create a Christingle during worship – taking an orange, to represent the world; four cocktail sticks of dried fruits, to represent God's gifts in creation; a red ribbon around, to represent Jesus' death on the cross for us; and a candle on top, to represent the light of Christ. Here is a seasonal prayer, using all these visual elements.

ORANGE. Creator God, who made this incredible universe and gave us intelligence for wonder: forgive us for the wounds we have inflicted on it; help those who suffer in it; and guide to gentler ways those who try to manipulate it, that we may all learn to care for your world as good servants of yours, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

RIBBON. God of all your children, who through your Son Jesus Christ reclaimed the world for yourself as he broke the power of evil and death on the cross: give us the spirit of determination to serve you to the utmost of our ability, not being distracted by sin either to right or left, but seeking the way that leads to your kingdom.

FRUITS. God of bounty, you have given us life and enough to sustain it. In our fellowship and service of one another teach us to appreciate our gifts, to share where others lack and receive what they have to give, that the world may become a fair place to live for all people.

CANDLE. God of light, who shines through the darkness and teaches us to appreciate the daylight: may we set the gospel of Jesus where all may see it in our lives, in our ways and in our thoughts, that our souls may be lit with joy, praise and thanksgiving, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Paul Reynard, All Year Round, CTBI (2006)

Prayer and Praise Services (all start at 7.30pm)

January 18th Symington

March 21st Libberton

December 21st Libberton.

February 15th Cairngryffe

Congregational Prayer Promoters

Symington – Mike Nisbet

Tel 01899 309018

Cairngryffe – Liz Hiddleston

Tel 01899 221664

Libberton and Quothquan - Lillas Nichols

Tel 01555 840572