

CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church



*Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*
ISAIAH 41 v10

Autumn 2019
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Maureen Blake
sandmblake@btinternet.com
Tel: (01506) 822603

Pat Brough
abrough@talktalk.net
Tel: (01506) 842497

Anita France
anitafrance2@hotmail.com
Tel: (01506) 847195

Gordon Young
gordon.young538@gmail.com
Tel: (01506) 844347

SUNDAY SERVICES



Communion

Sunday 27th October

All-Age Communion at 9:30am.
Traditional Communion at 11am
in the church
3pm in the Kirk Hall
with common and individual cups

Weekly Services

9.30am First Morning Service
Crèche in Cross House

9.45am All-Age Worship
Term time in Springfield School

11.00am Second Service

Monthly Communion

Sunday 24th November
at 12:15pm
Individual Cup

Cover photograph:
Courtesy of Stephen Blake

EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor
Myra Lawson
myralawson144@btinternet.com
Tel: (01506) 842634

Advertising
Vicki Carlin
vickicarlin6@googlemail.com
Tel: (01506) 845927

The deadline for the Winter 2019 issue is 31 December 2019

VIEW FROM THE MALTINGS

by Rev Thom Riddell



IT IS SAID that there is an old Chinese curse, 'May you live in interesting times.' We are certainly living in interesting times and in the midst of a great deal of uncertainty in our world. The global economy is unsettled by trade disputes; the treaties which seemed to offer assurance that nuclear weapons would not be used have been torn up and two 'nuclear powers' are facing up to each other in Kashmir. There are conflicts in Yemen, Syria and Afghanistan and civil protests in Hong Kong continue with no sign of resolution in sight. The impact of climate change is becoming more evident, although there is no global agreement on how we should respond. Nearer to home, as I write, the UK Parliament seems to be in disarray. The uncertainty of our future relationship with our neighbours in Europe continues, and the prospect of a 'Brexit with no deal' looms large. Even if the more pessimistic predictions of the impact of such an event prove to be wrong, there is likely to be a short-term downside.

When things are going well, it is easier for us to be happy and believe in God's goodness and care. The real test comes when our good fortune or happiness suddenly changes, or we are faced with circumstances which seem to be out of control. When, like a stormy sea, life seems to be turning against us and challenging what we believe.

We all go through these experiences personally and in a wider context. Disappointment and disillusionment, loss or betrayal, the agony of illness, the vulnerability of old age, the uncertainties in the world around us. Any of these can plunge us into a state of anxiety or despair. This is true for us, and it was true for those who were the closest companions of Jesus. Perhaps this is illustrated best by the experience of Peter when he saw Jesus walking on the water, approaching the boat in which the disciples were battling a heavy storm. His immediate reaction was to step out in faith and walk across the water towards Jesus. All was well when he was focused on Jesus but, when the strong winds and fierce waves distracted him, he began to sink. In his moment of fear, he called out to Jesus, and he was rescued.

Like Peter, we can become overwhelmed and sink into doubt about

God's protective care and his influence on the world around us. However, we can also learn from Peter's actions by calling out to Jesus. Even if we falter like Peter, we can reach out to the one who walked on the sea and calmed the waters. No matter how threatening or confusing our circumstances may become, as the psalmist reminds us, we have the assurance that the good and loving Shepherd knows us, and has promised to lead and protect us, even when we go through the valley of the shadow of death.

Remembering these examples, we are encouraged to act in faith and turn to God in prayer. Down through the ages, believers have testified that God will help us to deal with our challenges in new and hopeful ways. We don't need to do it all ourselves because we have the power of prayer, and the knowledge that we are guided and comforted by the Holy Spirit as we seek to serve in the name of Jesus Christ. We also know that God is waiting, and willing, to give us what we really need. So we must all keep praying and carry on.

B - I - G QUIZ NIGHT

The second Tear Fund Big Quiz Night will take place in churches all over the country on
Saturday 16 November.



St Michael's will host the event in the Kirk Hall at 7.15pm. Come on your own or with a team.

Light refreshments available.
Suggested donation £5.

For information contact Alison
– 01506 844992
or alisonleesmillier@gmail.com

THE ELEMENTS OF COMMUNION

by Pat Brough



THE ORGAN PLAYS 'St George's Edinburgh' and the congregation sing 'Ye gates, lift up your heads on high'; the Elders walk in at the 11am service, solemnly carrying the elements in preparation for the Communion service. But how many people know what goes on behind the scenes?

The church is prepared on the Saturday before Communion by a team from the congregation who cover the pews with white cloths, and then clip them in position ready for the Sunday morning.

In November, eight ladies gather in Cross House – Marion Duncan, Wendy Duncan, Margaret Pilcher, Anne Bennie, Jean Meldrum, Anne Law, Sheila Rae and Alison Murray. These eight, under the guidance of Marion Duncan, work out a rota to arrange the bread and wine for the four main Communion services.

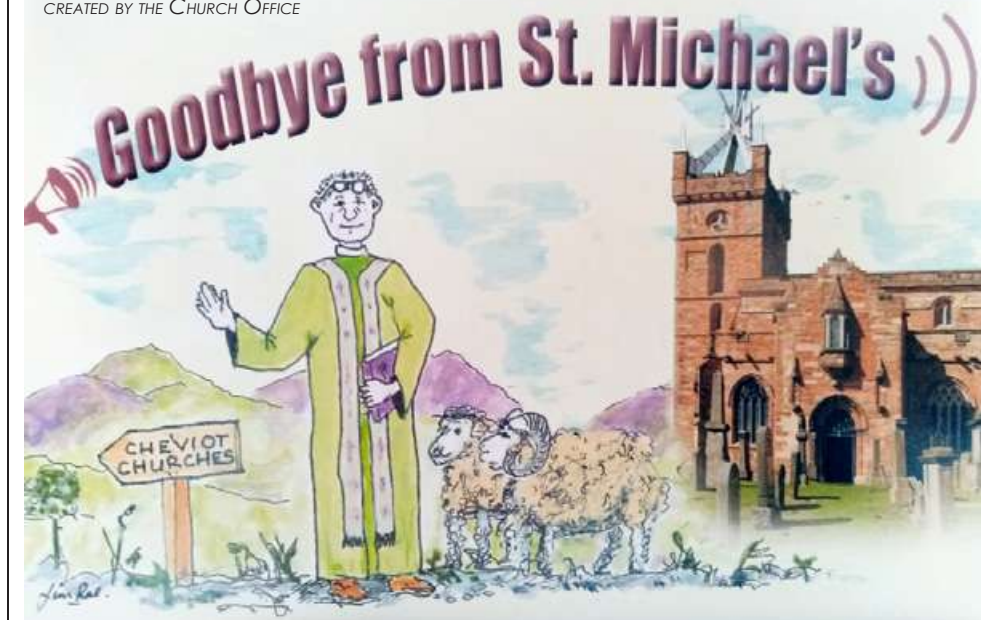
Two people prepare the elements. Anne Law buys the wine; white bread is purchased by an Elder on the rota; Angus Robertson bakes brown bread. Two ladies on the rota arrive at church before 9am. They work in the entrance to the choir room, preparing the bread, which is wrapped in linen napkins, and pouring the wine into the chalices. The elements are then laid on the Communion Table in preparation for the 9.30am service. Following the first service, everything is prepared for the Elders to uplift at the second. At the end of Communion, unused bread and wine is discarded. At monthly Communions, held at the end of the second service, individual cups are used alternatively with the silver chalices.

Silver is always washed in the church and individual cups are taken home by the ladies on duty. A similar procedure is followed for afternoon Communions.

In the week following the Communion in the church, services are held in the various residential homes, and there two ladies on the rota assist the Minister in serving the elements to the residents. Elders whose district includes a home frequently attend these short, but much welcomed services. Also, the Pastoral Care Team and Ministers, supported by the District Elder, take Home Communion to those who are housebound or unable to attend one of the church services. Communion is also held at the first Kirk Session of the year.

Thanks to Marion and her team, everything works smoothly.

FAREWELL CARD FOR COLIN
CREATED BY THE CHURCH OFFICE



... and greetings from Cheviot Manse!

Cheviot Manse,
Main Street,
MOREBATTLE,
TD5 8QG

revcdj60@gmail.com

Greetings from Cheviot Manse! From my study window I look out on a field of broccoli and on to the Cheviot Hills. It is all very pastoral, and I am looking forward to my ministry here. Though I will probably need to invest in a pair of wellingtons and a good raincoat.

I have quite literally just moved in and have still to be inducted at time of writing, but it is a good chance to reflect on my time at St. Michael's. When I arrived back from Egypt last November I met up with John Povey and Thom Riddell, and they asked how long I envisaged being at St Michael's. Well, Ministries Council had suggested a locumship of 3-6 months, so I proposed that I would stay till Easter. Easter came and went, and in many ways I felt too comfortable at St Michael's, so there was no real urgency to leave. But leave I must, and I was happy to accept the call to Cheviot churches. Now it is the end of August, so I had been in Linlithgow for nine months, and that is testimony to just how much at home I have felt at St. Michael's. Everyone has been so kind and welcoming, and I feel that I have made many friends in my short time here. It has also been a valuable re-introduction to life in Scotland

RIGHT: KIRK YETHOLM

and the Church of Scotland, after 25 years working in the World Church.

I was enormously touched at my 'farewell service' on 18th August by the presentation of a most marvellous stole, beautifully embroidered with six 'features' of St Michael's. I will always treasure it. I was also given a very handsome home communion set, which will be put to good use in the Borders. A cheque completed the presentation, and I spent some of it already buying a particularly fine desk at the Strathcarron Hospice furniture shop. My heartfelt thanks to all who contributed!



Now instead of walking along the busy High Street, I will be in the quiet rural settings of the village green in Kirk Yetholm or Teapot Street in Morebattle. Instead of visiting St John's in Livingston, I will have the slightly longer journey to the Borders General Hospital. Instead of St Michael, I will have to become accustomed to St Cuthbert, whose Way passes by the manse en route to Lindisfarne. A retreat centre/cafe is rather conveniently opposite the manse!

There are of course various local traditions, especially connected to the Ridings, and two young people in Yetholm are chosen each year to be the Bari Gadgi and Bari Manushi. I am learning a different vocabulary.

I will have two services on a Sunday, usually at Yetholm (10am) and Morebattle (11.15am), though on the first service of the month the service is at Linton (instead of Morebattle). Linton is a Norman church, and one of the oldest in continuous use in the Borders. It has a beautiful lintel of a knight fighting the 'worm of Linton'. Echoes of St. Michael! There is also a church at Hownam which is used a few times a year, and a way chapel at Hoselaw.

As I mentioned at my Farewell, there is an open door at the manse, so please feel very free to visit. May the good Lord bless you as you continue to serve Christ.

Rev Colin



MUSIC OF ST MICHAEL'S

A YEAR FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

by Matt Edwards



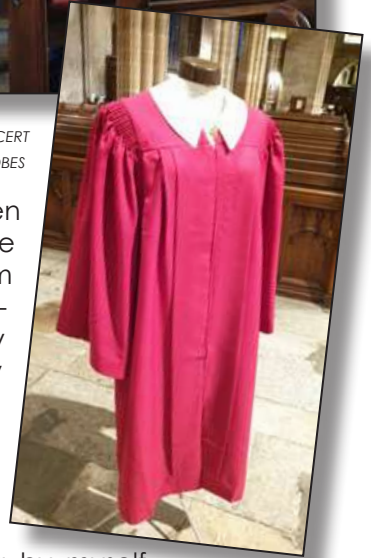
WELL, JUST OVER a year – I suppose however time does fly! What a time we have had as a community since the end of May 2018, and I am delighted to say that music still plays a major role in the church journey and I think that I have just about managed to hold on to my sanity in that time!

The adult choir continues to put up with me and have grown in number, role and repertoire. Our goal of two Sunday anthems has been achieved and we look forward to further development in the coming months as we work towards our first concert in October and then Christmas. A major (pun intended) change for the choir is happening right now with the introduction of the first new choir robes in forty years, and a change





ABOVE: AN APPRECIATIVE AUDIENCE AT A MUSIC@3PM CONCERT
LEFT: THE STYLISH NEW CHOIR ROBES



of colour – yes, 'change'. These will first be seen at the Patronal festival. The funds for these have come from the extremely successful Music@3pm concert series. Over the year the choir has self-funded new black folders and various new pieces of music. We hope to recruit some new members over the coming months as well as those who kindly join us for the festive season. We have also been invited to sing at Dunblane Cathedral next year. The adult band have made three appearances at services with some rather questionable orchestral arranging by myself, we hope to welcome them on a more regular basis.

Our concert series has been a huge success, averaging audiences of a hundred for each recital. My thanks to all of you who have supported, publicised and worked behind the scenes to make these events so enjoyable for all who came along. As I write this, we still have two left! With the funds raised over and above the cost of re-robing the choir we will be able to reach out to more performers for the next series as I am sure that you are sick of seeing me at the front each time!

We have fantastic musical resources here at St Michael's, and an acoustic that people long to perform in. Thank you for helping me make the most of it.

GIVING TO THE CHURCH IN A DIGITAL WORLD

by Andrew Jones, Gift Aid Convener



AS WE CONTINUE our stewardship of treasure year, one that has already seen a successful Gift Day in March and general materials issued in June, the Stewardship & Finance Team have been on the lookout for new and innovative fund-raising channels for the church. Using your contactless card on the collection bag isn't on the horizon any time soon, but I thought to take this opportunity to remind everyone of a couple of other digital ways to support the church's work financially. These have been available for a while, but in case you've forgotten (or not heard) about them let me tell you about them:

Earn donations when you shop online

Donating to the church whilst online does not necessarily mean having to pay anything extra. Whenever you buy anything on the internet — weekly groceries, a new outfit, renewing your insurance, Christmas shopping, even your annual holiday — you could be collecting free donations for the church. St Michael's has linked up with **easyfundraising** who have over 3,600 shops and sites signed up

and ready to donate, including many big names such as Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, Next, Aviva, thetrainline and Sainsbury's — and it doesn't cost you a penny extra when you shop this way.

It's as easy as a, b, c...

- a. You can join for free at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmichaelslinlithgow/>
- b. Every time you shop online, go to **easyfundraising** first, find the site you want and then click through to start shopping.
- c. After you've checked out, that retailer will make a donation to the church at no extra cost to you.

There are no catches or hidden charges and St Michael's will benefit from your shopping. Why not give it a try the next time you settle down at your computer to go shopping?

Give by card online

Thanks to Stewardship, a Christian charity providing fundraising services to churches across the country, we can accept donations by credit or debit card via the

The new easyfundraising website is here



church website. At the foot of every *stmichaelsparish.org.uk* page there is a red '**support us at give.net**' button that links to a page where a donation can be made. Our link up with Stewardship means that they securely process the card transaction, handle Gift Aid where appropriate, and send on the funds at regular intervals (less a small amount to cover card fees). As all the processing is carried out by Stewardship, donations can also be made anonymously so that no personal details are shared with anyone at St Michael's (yet the church can still benefit from Gift Aid on the donation if applicable). All of this works on any internet connected device with a web browser, including tablets and smartphones.

This facility is not intended to replace any of the existing giving arrangements such as Standing Orders, envelopes, or good old cash, but is an additional channel for those occasions when paying by card is more convenient. As well as being available to any visitor to the website regardless of whether they have a connection to Linlithgow or St Michael's, it can also be used by anyone who prefers to give by card, or wishes to donate without revealing their details to anyone in St Michael's, or even those who

have their smart phone and card to hand but no cash on a Sunday morning when the collection bag comes round (not quite contactless card payments, but close).

Both of these schemes, and anything else that might come along, operate alongside all the existing arrangements that many of you use already — standing orders, freewill envelopes, cash, regular and irregular donations by cheque — which St Michael's will always continue to accept with grateful thanks. And please remember that anyone can adjust their regular giving, however they may choose to do it, at any time, in any way without reference to anyone in the church.

If you'd like more details of either of the two schemes detailed above, or about giving to the church in any of the other ways mentioned, or have thoughts about other ways of giving we should be thinking of please get in touch with me, Andrew Jones, in confidence, by phone on 840914, email via giving@stmichaels-parish.org.uk, or look out for me in the church on a Sunday morning.





JOHNNY PATON

— A REFLECTION

When we were producing material for the 'Faith and Fabric' project I recalled a number of conversations with Johnny about the church building and I asked him if he could put his thoughts down on paper. This is what he sent me.

It is both poetic and profound. It is also particularly poignant given the circumstances of Johnny's death. It challenges us to expand our faith, to encounter God in our wonderful building, and to believe more deeply in this 'God of the wide open spaces'. Many of us will recognise Johnny's voice as we read it.

Brian Lightbody

I DO MY BEST believing on tops of mountains! The sense of space just opens me up.

St Michael's was as near to that sense of openness as I have felt indoors. Indeed the sense of stillness meant that you could listen too.

I would go up to St Michael's with a sense of anticipation. I knew there was going to be lots of space and lots of stillness even if the church was busy. There was always a moment when it was just me, and the room to believe more than was normal.

There was no sense of being restricted or being squashed into a particular wee mind set. It was as if the still space gave you the room and the desire to expand your faith. And there was a sense of God in the vastness of it all.

The amount of light added more height, and music reverberating round the walls added more depth. And then there was the width. I sensed that there was room enough in the vastness of it all for everyone to believe the way they were inspired to by this God of the wide open spaces.

I often left with an expanded sense of what I was and who we were and who God was. I cannot go the length of getting to St Michael's as often as I would like.

I think I am going to have to climb another mountain!'

Johnny Paton
February 2017

JOHNNY PATON

— IN MEMORIAM



WHAT WAS IT about Johnny Paton that made him so likeable and so memorable? His slightly questioning smile, with that raised eyebrow? The way he gave you time, so that somehow you found what it was you wanted to say even though you hadn't known before? His facility to tune in to where you were and what you were concerned about, and make you feel better about it even though nothing had changed? His amazing ability to weave a scenario or a story through his sermon, keeping you hanging on to the end?

Partly it was the way he combined vulnerability with strength. We all go through experiences of death and resurrection in life, and Johnny certainly knew what that felt like. After 25 years as a parish minister in Kintyre, and nursing his first wife, he was burnt out and took a year off to walk the hills alone. Then, ready to dip a toe back into ministerial work, he phoned 121 George Street.

He arrived at St Michael's and immediately felt at home — so much so that his temporary, part-time role quickly became full-time and permanent. He had five very happy years here as associate minister. He spent time with folk, he listened, he shared laughter - and he mesmerised us with his preaching. He said himself that St Michael's helped him to rediscover his calling. And he and Cathy fell for each other and became man and wife. By the end of those five years he was ready when the call came to the North Mull parishes.

There is so much in the rich metaphor of the good shepherd, from John chapter 10, that reminds us of Johnny. A caring communicator who liked to walk the hills alone. A man of strength and vulnerability. A man who got to know people not just by name, but by character, their hopes and fears. A man who led by example and in whom people put their trust. And in all of these qualities, Johnny pointed us back to the great good shepherd — to Jesus himself.

Psalm 23 — 'The Lord's my Shepherd' — closes with an image of a thanksgiving meal, once the long shift on the hills has been completed; God is now the generous host welcoming us with a groaning table and a full cup. Here too, it's hard not to think of Johnny, called home suddenly from the hills to a greater feast in a mansion with many rooms. I picture the great good shepherd greeting him with a warm embrace and the words 'Well done, good and faithful servant'.

We continue to remember Cathy and Andrew, and Johnny's congregations, colleagues and many friends in their loss. The shock of his sudden going still resonates. But let us also give thanks for all that we gained from knowing him, and for all whom God touched through his life and ministry.

Alan Miller



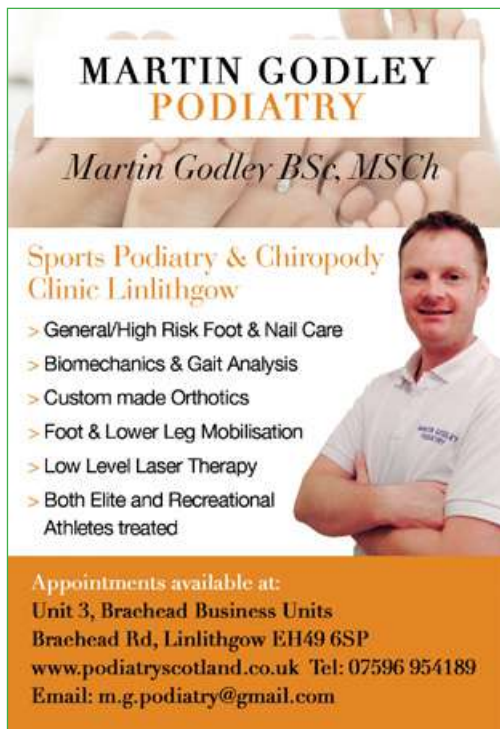
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2030: OUR STORY

by Alan Miller



WHAT WILL ST MICHAEL'S be like in 2030? During the autumn of 2019, we'll have the opportunity to start creating St Michael's 'future story' in a series of imaginative workshops developed by Rev Russell McLarty. They're designed to open up our creative thinking, and they will be great fun!

We'll work together to create and share characters, to talk about the 'good gossip' they might hear about St Michael's in 2030, and to identify the things about our buildings and people that could give them the 'wow' factor 10 years from now. Drawing on that bank of new thinking, over the succeeding months we'll use visual art, words and music to help us all explore the ideas further. This will lead up to a conference-style event in February 2020 where we'll identify which ideas we want to focus on as a church as we look towards the future.

Russell McLarty is a Church of Scotland minister who has worked for many years with churches undergoing periods of change. The workshop process grew out of his passions for storytelling, and for helping churches to develop the potential of both their people and their buildings. When I attended a 'walk-through' workshop earlier this year, I was blown away by how it freed up everyone's creative energy to produce some amazing ideas in a short time.

Who should take part? This is for everybody who wants to see St Michael's thrive in the future. You don't need to be artistic — I'm certainly not — or to have any special skills, or to know much about what's going on. You just need to be willing to use your imagination, and to enjoy the process.

The workshops will take place in the Adam Room on Tuesday evenings from 7-9pm (29th October, 5th and 12th November) and Sunday afternoons from 2-4pm (3rd, 10th and 17th November).

The more people who get involved, from age 11 to 111, the better! Each workshop can accommodate up to 40 people and each person only comes to one workshop, so we're looking for up to 240 people to bring their creative contribution.

To help manage the numbers, please book your workshop attendance online at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2030-our-story-workshops-tickets-68724010365>, or through the Church office at 842188. Come along and be part of the future!

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PARISH REGISTER

FUNERALS

I am the resurrection and the life

May

Alexander (Sandy) Stewart, Holmesview
Care Home (formerly St Ninian's Road)

June

Marian (Maisie) Stanners, Falkirk
(formerly St Ninian's Road)
Neil Irvine, Thornlea Nursing Home,
Loanhead (formerly St Magdalene's)

July

Allan Old, Philip Avenue
Alix Davidson, Ferniebanks Cottage
Margaret McCulloch, Edinburgh

August

Jim Brindle, Bellsburn Avenue
Thomas Veitch, Friarsbrae

September

Margaret MacLeod, St Ninian's Road



WEDDINGS

They are no longer two, but one



June

Laura Cameron to Stuart Morris
Hollie Harrison to Brian Jarvie
Julia MacDonald to Lewis Vanstone

July

Claire Montgomery to Martin McCullough
Debbie Thomas to Stephen Batty

August

Roslyn Ogg to Jorge Pinto
Liang Jun Cheng to Iain Hinde
Emma Fairley to Bradley Lewis-Hinds
Abby Barclay to Ross Miller

BAPTISMS

Let the children come to me

June

Naiyah Rose MacGillivray, Bailiellands

July

Luke Andrew Davidson, Bailiellands

August

Rosie Fiona Elizabeth Morton,
Clarendon Crescent
Emily Lynsey McMillan, Bo'ness
Mary Yvonne Richardson, Burgess Hill



NEW MEMBER

For we are all members of one body



Luke Davidson, Bailiellands
Graeme Shaw, Bo'ness



Friday 6th December
10.30 am — 7 pm
Saturday 7th December
10.30 am — 7 pm
Sunday 8th December
2 pm — 7 pm
TICKETS: Adults £5
Children £2
(Under 5s FREE)
Family Ticket £10.00
(2 Adults and 2 Children)

FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES

by Margaret Johnston

FOR THE LAST two years, at the beginning of December, St Michael's was transformed into a Christmas wonderland.

Last year saw 46 church groups, schools and community organisations getting creative as they decorated a Christmas tree that depicted their chosen Christmas carol or song. The sight was truly a spectacle bringing in over 1000 visitors to the Church. It was a weekend for all the family as the excitement of Christmas builds. We even overheard someone saying that it doesn't feel like Christmas until you have been to the Festival of Christmas Trees!

With expectations like that, we had to ensure that the Festival of Christmas Trees came back for 2019 and we are hoping to build on the success of the last two years when it returns on 6–8 December.

The Fellowship Team takes the lead in organising this event, however it is not their help we need. The Christmas fun and sparkle comes from the church groups, community groups, local organisations, schools and local businesses who take part. Could you take part by decorating a Christmas tree? Our theme this year is 'Around the World'.

We will supply you with a Christmas tree and lights — all you have to do is pick a country and bring the decorations! Money raised throughout this event will be divided among local charities.

If you, or anyone you know, might be interested in taking part we would love to hear from you! Please contact Margaret Johnston at maggij@btconnect.com or by calling 07344 517715.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS

Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon in the Kirk Hall.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 19 October | Stand up to Cancer |
| 26 October | Friends of Girl Guiding |
| 9 November | Linlithgow Cluster Primary Ski Club fundraiser |
| 30 November | Guild Teas for Advent Fair |
| 7 December | 4th West Lothian Scouts |
| 11 January | Linlithgow Academy Hockey Club |
| 1 February | Chogoria |
| 15 February | Linlithgow Grange Rotary |

EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

| | | |
|--------------|--------|---|
| 13 October | 3pm | Music@3pm – St Michael's Church Choir |
| 19 October | 7.30pm | Linlithgow Arts Guild Chamber Music concert |
| 25 October | TBC | Bathgate String Orchestra |
| 2 November | 7.30pm | Glasgow Phoenix Choir |
| 23 November | 7.30pm | Linlithgow String Orchestra Winter concert |
| 24 November | 2.00pm | Music Buds Concert |
| 30 November | 7.30pm | Linlithgow Arts Guild Chamber Orchestra |
| 1 December | TBC | NYCoS Christmas Concert |
| 6–8 December | am/pm | Festival of Christmas Trees |
| 14 December | 7.30pm | Linlithgow Ladies Choir |
| 15 December | TBC | Linlithgow Reed Band |
| 18 January | 7.30pm | Linlithgow Arts Guild – Chamber concert (mezzo soprano & piano) |
| 8 February | 7.30pm | Linlithgow Arts Guild – Chamber concert |

OTHER EVENTS

| | | |
|-------------|--------|-------------------------|
| 26 October | 4.30pm | Messy Church |
| 16 November | 7.15pm | Tearfund Big Quiz Night |
| 7 December | 4.30pm | Messy Church |
| 1 February | 4.30pm | Messy Church |

WEBSITES

www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk – See Crosswind in full colour! Also find podcasts of sermons, current intimations, details of upcoming events and all other church activities.

www.helpcentre.org.uk – For information on support available for most situations.

LINLITHGOW WAR MEMORIAL

by Brian Lightbody



WE HAVE RECENTLY completed the restoration of the town war memorial in the church. It required extensive repair as the original fixings for the bronze memorial plaques had corroded badly, become seriously unsafe, and had caused the adjacent stone panels to crack. New sandstone sections had to be sourced to match the existing stone, new stainless steel fittings made, and the bronze memorial plaques re-patinated. The £20,950 cost was covered by a grant from the War Memorial Trust and by a contribution from West Lothian Council.

The memorial was funded at the time by public subscription and replaced a temporary one at Low Port. It was unveiled, following a

military parade in the town, at a dedication service on 24 July 1921, led by the Rev Walter Williamson of St Giles. The minister, the Rev Robert Coupar, read out the names of the 158 local men who had died in WW1, sadly including the name of his own son, Captain Sydney Coupar. A further 66 names were added after WW2, including the name of one woman, Wren Helen Hunter.

The memorial was rededicated at the annual civic week service on the 16th June 2019. We have installed a 'time capsule' this time, including details of the restoration, the history of the memorial, copies of the newspapers of the day and a copy of Crosswind, perhaps to be opened at its next restoration 100 years from now.

News from the Property Team

by Jim Rae



A MANAGEMENT TEAM chaired by Brian Lighbody with an architect, structural engineer and three Property Team members will manage the Cross House Phase 1 improvement project. We have the fees for preparing the design and tender documents from the architect and structural engineer. These will be presented for consideration and approval by the Session. The external funding team is working on proposals for discussion with potential funding bodies.

Drainage investigation work has tracked pipework from the Palace car park to its outflow position along

the Peel lochside. Eco-friendly dye was flushed down the drain, eventually emerging into the loch at the small harbour, providing a possible option to evacuate our rainwater into the loch. Design of the south side drainage system continues, with simple solutions being proposed. Meetings with Scottish Water, SEPA, local authority and Historic Environment Scotland are in hand to agree a solution. This project will be run in conjunction with new toilet pod drainage, with lower level church gutters being lined with lead to preserve stonework and prevent water ingress into the church.

The church West Door refurbishment project is underway. The appointed contactor has carried out a detailed photographic study before work starts. The doors will be removed and temporary security doors fitted.

The 'Crown of Thorns' was structurally surveyed some twenty-five years ago and we felt that a condition survey was overdue. Phase 1 structural survey is complete, indicating that a number of corroded aluminium cladding fixing screws require replacing. Several cladding panels were loose (but not dangerous) because of this deterioration. As a full height investigation of the Crown of Thorns was not possible we decided on a

RIGHT: ROOF SPACE REINFORCEMENTS IN SOME AREAS WILL BE MADE MORE ROBUST

Phase 2 level survey to inspect the structural integrity of the 'Pineapple', the section where all structural members converge. A drone survey would be more cost effective than expensive scaffolding construction from the flat top of the Bell Tower. A quotation for this drone survey was approved by Stewardship and Finance.



The Manse has undergone LED lighting improvements throughout the building, including stairway lighting. A new kitchen has been installed, both functional and modern. Additional thermal insulation has been added to loft spaces and new ventilation air supply and extract fans and ducting have been fitted in the ensuite bathrooms for the main and guest bedrooms on the upper level.

Our planning application for new windows for the Manse, built in 1975, was initially rejected by WLC Planning Department on grounds that UPVC frames are not desirable in a conservation area. We appealed against this decision and Councillor Tom Conn and I attended a meeting to present our case, which I am delighted to say, we won. Permission was given to install UPVC top hung double glazed windows. An installation date will be negotiated as soon as possible. The Manse will need Internal decoration in selected areas and carpet replacement throughout; this will be actioned after discussions with the incoming minister.

Clearing of garden ground and rejuvenation of the lower garden area adjacent to the Vennel car park is underway and is being carried out by members of the West Lothian Criminal Justice Team. The team leaders have indicated that the grounds will be maintained on a weekly basis until late autumn. The Manse family will have an agreed area to maintain as a family garden.

David Robertson has concluded the initial proposals for a revised strategy regarding key/lock security, which will be presented to the Kirk Session in September. GDPR legislation requires security of personal information and our insurers call for an effective key strategy for church properties.

The property annual inspections were carried out during September and will form the basis for assessing the annual repair and maintenance financial requirement for 2020.

Work continues throughout all of our properties and we welcome all offers of help. Please contact me if you would be able to assist the team in any way.

A MILESTONE BIRTHDAY



**for our
Boys' Brigade**

by Lisa Callaghan

THERE ARE A number of Youth Organisations in our beautiful town including Brownies, Girls' Brigade and the Scouts. But as a Lieutenant of 2nd Linlithgow Boys' Brigade, I believe we have a unique selling point.

We allow young people to come together in their community, whilst providing a range of fun and developmental activities. We believe that empowering children and young people is important and we do this by involving them in decision making at all levels of the BB and giving responsibility appropriate to their age and aptitude.

Our Company has been running for 40 years. This would not have happened without the dedication of everyone that previously played a part in the running of our wonderful organisation, not forgetting about the 21 current leaders and helpers that walk through the doors of Cross House on a Thursday evening.

There are a number of things that we are planning to do in order to celebrate this fantastic achievement:-

Firstly, we are going to organise a company photo. A serious undertaking, not only to ensure that we are all in the same place at the same time, but also making sure that everyone is looking in the same direction, and have a smile on their face.

We are going to hold a company games night. Our boys are aged 5-17 years old, so this will be a varied evening of fun and exercise, ranging from Tig to Dodge Ball!

Our Junior Section will be heading away to a weekend camp in April 2020. The Well Road Centre in Moffat is a large Victorian house set in its own grounds, and therefore we don't have to worry too much about the boys disturbing all of the neighbours with the amount of noise they will all be making. There will be lots of activities nearby that the boys will enjoy taking part in.

We are planning a Social evening for current and ex leaders. We are hoping the evening will be full of fun, sharing stories, and involving ex-members in projects we are currently working on.

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LINLITHGOW LIVES

BRUCE JAMIESON HAS compiled together in an attractive, fully illustrated format some of the articles he has written for the Black Bitch magazine and for Crosswind. He has also researched and written several new features including chapters on such local characters as Mrs Glen Gordon, Captain Robert Blair, Rev John Ferguson and Katie Wearie. Featured also in it are several chapters reflecting the life and times of St Michael's Church – some using previously unseen material.

The project has been sponsored by two former pupils of Linlithgow Academy, businessmen Alan Steel and Calum Paterson and that has allowed the full colour volume to be sold at just £7-99.

The book will be launched at a signing session in "Far From The Madding Crowd" on Saturday 26th October (11-00am – 2-00pm). On that same evening at 7-00pm Bruce will deliver an illustrated presentation in St. Peter's Church. Thereafter, it will be on sale in the bookshop and in Linlithgow Post Office.

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Companions On The Road

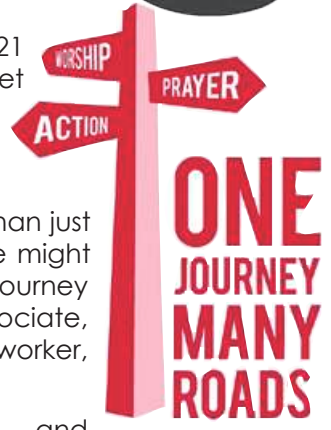
by Margaret Henderson



THIS IS THE SECOND year in the Guild's 2018-2021 strategy, 'One Journey, Many Roads'. Having set out in 2018 by looking ahead and 'Seeking the Way', we now continue our journey together as 'Companions on the Road'.

By companions we are talking about much more than just fellow travellers. It's not about thinking of who else might be on the same journey, rather who is sharing the journey with us. A companion is defined as follows: associate, partner, escort, consort, colleague, workmate, co-worker, compatriot, confederate, ally.

The role of companion provides support and encouragement, empathy and co-operation. I am reminded of marriage vows which talk about 'richer and poorer, better and worse, in sickness and in health'. There is something in these phrases about sharing joy and pain and the ups and downs of life's journey. As we meet in the Kirk Hall, we are going to celebrate the companionship that the Guild offers. One way of doing this is through the projects which we will be supporting this year – 'Join up the Dots' and Malawi Fruits.



Join up the Dots

'Join up the Dots' is a collaborative project between Crossreach and the Guild to tackle the problem of loneliness and social isolation in Scotland. Some statistics:

200,000 people over the age of 65 have not had a proper conversation with family or friends for a month

8 out of 10 carers have felt lonely or socially isolated as a result of looking after a loved one

22% of people in Scotland feel they don't have a strong sense of belonging in their community

11% of adults in Scotland often feel lonely and 38% sometimes feel lonely

Problems like these have a very damaging effect on people's physical and mental wellbeing. We see this amongst some of our own congregation

and we aim to expose these problems and attempt to provide solutions for them.

Malawi Fruits is a young Scottish Christian Charity committed to working with young farmers in Malawi by transforming the lives of hundreds of small-scale farmers by providing resources, training and support to enable them to earn a decent living which in turn provides an increase in income for spending on housing improvements, school fees and business development.

Our syllabus is varied and enjoyable. We are having a visit from Claire Moore of 'Jewellery by Design' and we will be supporting the new Linlithgow Museum; who can doubt the support and encouragement offered by Maggie's Centre, and then a very present problem – Financial Fraud. Our four-legged companions are not forgotten as we learn about 'Bravehound' and 'Ponies help Children'; Donna from 'Neil's Hugs Foundation' is coming to tell us about how her charity supports those affected by suicide which is an ever-increasing problem.

Meetings are relaxed and informal with home-baking, lots of puzzles to solve, good conversation and laughter. Please come and join us. You don't have to attend every meeting. Dip in and out as you like. One thing is assured – a warm welcome!

Let us help you get ready for Christmas!

There is so much to do as we get nearer to Christmas, we make sure that we are ready now to help with **gifts and decorations** for you to get ahead with your tasks.


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PRAYER NOTES

by Ruth Middleton

THE PRAYER QUILTS Group works under the auspices of the Pastoral Care Team and was set up to make small prayer quilts for people who are ill or house bound. (Picture above).



The Group has also made two preaching stoles, one recently for Hilary Beresford and one for Colin Johnston (picture left) to mark their time in S Michael's, in their transition from ministry overseas to Scotland.

This work is a small but important part of the overall prayer life of the Church, presently led by the Pastoral Care Team but becoming increasingly part of the focus of other Kirk Session Teams as well as of the whole Church of Scotland in movements such as 'Together we pray'. More information about new ideas will emerge in coming months, but for now here is

another illustration of just a few of the prayer requests left in the Prayer Box in the Queen's Aisle for the Wednesday Prayer Group each week.



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A picture can be worth a 1000 words!

by Marshall Green

I AM SURE the vast majority of us have heard this true statement; possibly first used by Leonardo da Vinci when he wrote that a poet would be 'overcome by sleep and hunger before being able to describe with words what a painter is able to depict in an instant'. Did you also know that approximately 65% of the population are visual learners and visual aids improve learning by up to 400%?

As well as our predecessors, through architecture, sculpture, and the art of stained glass, we all know the potential of images (still and moving) of biblical events and teaching. What other ways can we communicate the wonder of God's creation, the gospel of Jesus Christ? What proportion of the congregation could clearly see baptisms, weddings, funerals, plays, primary school and Sunday Club nativities/activities etc, etc without screens? All schools have interactive whiteboards and daily most or all of our young people are using screens educationally and for leisure.

After a period of more than 20 years, when we have gone from overhead projector, to front projection with data projector on to a small screen, to rear projection on to a large screen, we now have 3* high definition cameras, 7 monitors, a mixing desk, laptop and, should we desire to invest a bit further, the possibility of extending our audience worldwide, by streaming events live on to the internet.

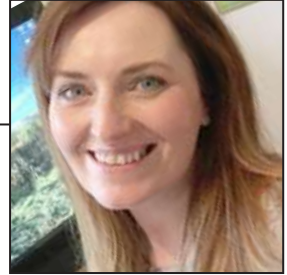
This was all thanks to a very significant donation from a member of our congregation and a large amount of planning over the last 2-3 years. Visits were made to other churches far and wide to see what they had done, plans drawn up, plans amended, permissions requested, quotes collected, and tests carried out. Thanks are also due to the Friends of St. Michael's, who financed the beautiful bespoke desk to accommodate all the hardware.

The final result we now feel is a highly professional installation being operated by a group of amateurs on a steep learning curve. Although we are aware of a few faults we are working to resolve these but please feel free to share your thoughts with us. We want it to be the best it can be.

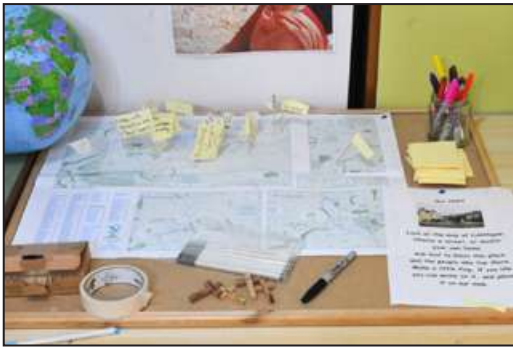
THY KINGDOM COME

Prayer Space

By Trish Archibald



THY KINGDOM COME is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.



This year the Moderator of the General Assembly encouraged local congregations to take part. In the week running up to Pentecost Sunday we set up the Kirkgate Room in Cross House as a Prayer Space. Therefore, St Michael's became part of this growing movement and we registered with Thy Kingdom Come as a place people were

welcome to come and pray.

Our Youth Fellowship group helped set up the room. The Prayer Space was open to everyone to come to, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and spend some time in prayer. We had various areas in the room with different interactive activities to help guide our thoughts. We had an area about self-image and self-worth, a large map of our world to help us think of people and places further away, we also had a map of our town and encouraged people to pray for our schools, homes and families.

We had some information about the persecuted church, and an area to think about five people in our lives we could commit to praying for that week. Two of our most talked about activities were our



sand tray, where you would draw or write something that you wanted to asked forgiveness for in the sand, spend some time in prayer and then use your hand to erase what you had asked forgiveness for. The other activity that stood out for many people was simply little stones that you held in your hand and these represented something that was causing you worry. When you were ready you placed your worry stone at the foot of a cross, in the knowledge that we need to leave our worries and anxieties with Jesus as he cares for us.

Over the space of the week, the Prayer Space was a busy little room. Many people, including people who had no Christian faith, said they found the room to have a very



peaceful atmosphere and had greatly benefited from spending some quiet time there. Children, parents, house groups, couples, individuals and friends all spent time in the room. Many prayers were said for our community and our church family, and there was much prayer for God's provision of a new minister for us at St Michael's.

However, it was an amazing experience to be part of something bigger than our own part of God's Kingdom here in Linlithgow. For the week there was a real sense of being joined in prayer with thousands of our brothers and sisters in Christ right around the globe. Sometimes it is easy to forget just how big God's family is and Thy Kingdom Come helped us to remember that we are part of something bigger than we can imagine.

Due to the success of the Prayer Space, the decision was taken to have a scaled down version in the church, over the summer months. A couple of us set up a Prayer Trail in the church. This has allowed both visitors and members to experience some of the interactive prayer stations from Thy Kingdom Come. Many of our visitors to St Michael's have made use of this and we have had a lot of positive feedback.

For me, the Prayer Room has reminded me of the importance of prayer in all of our lives as followers of Jesus. In any relationship, communication is key. As Christians, prayer is our communication with our loving God who is always ready to listen to his children.

MORE FAITH

by Gordon Wardall



*'Give us more faith, Lord' the disciples ask
Jesus in Luke 17:5.*

MANY CHRISTIANS MAKE this request, afraid or anxious about something in their personal lives or in the world around. We may worry about our relationship with God and his plan for our lives; be unable to forgive someone who hurt us, or unable to display the joy of knowing Jesus. We may feel that we will let God down or God let us down.

Replying to the disciples, Jesus likens faith to a mustard seed, a very tiny seed. This answer points to the issues for everyone, including disciples: not how much faith we have, but whether we have any faith at all.

Our big problem is that we look at ourselves rather than at God. We tend to regard faith as another resource or ability; one we have a lot of or little, are good at or bad. Similarly we say we're not strong enough, wise enough or patient enough, we also say 'we don't have enough faith'. We look at ourselves and say 'we can't do it'.

We forget that the focus of faith should be God – not ourselves. Our own resources and abilities may seem poor and inadequate, but they all come ultimately from God. He will help us to use them to do his work. As Corrie ten Boom says, 'It is not my ability, but my response to God's ability, that counts'.

God doesn't leave us to face difficult times or do his work by ourselves. Rather, we have to reach down to the small seed within us, and start doing what God wills, trusting him to do the rest. With the mustard seed analogy, Jesus also makes the point that faith is not fixed or static. Rather it is something that, with nurture, lives and grows.

Jesus' disciples often seem an unimpressive bunch; sometimes displaying bewilderment or fear, frequently failing to grasp the point of his teaching. Yet most went on to become highly effective servants of God, overcoming hostility and rejection, many giving their lives to spread a message that would change the world.

The take home message is not 'have more faith', but work with the faith we already have, believing that God will do the rest.

Prayer: 'Loving God, help us to trust in you and to do your work, to your glory.' Amen

USEFUL CONTACTS

The Ministry

Interim Moderator

Rev John Povey
tel: (01506) 882495
email: revjppovey@aol.com

Locum Minister

Rev Ken MacKay
tel: (01506) 410884

Auxiliary Minister

Rev Thom Riddell
tel: (01506) 843251

Youth & Family Outreach Worker

Trish Archibald
tel: 07746828279

Church Office

Val Wood
Mon, Wed, Thurs: 9am – 1pm
Tues by appointment
Fri: 11am to 1pm
tel: (01506) 842188
e-mail: info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk

Office Bearers

Session Clerk

Alan Miller
tel: (01506) 844992

Gift Aid Convener

Andrew Jones
tel: (01506) 840914

Organist & Coordinator of Music

Matt Edwards
tel: 07903327159

Roll Keeper

Alan Bennie
tel: (01506) 848166

Organisations

The Guild

Margaret Henderson
tel: (01506) 844787

Parent and Toddlers

Margaret Henderson
tel: (01506) 844787

Seedlings

Trish Archibald
tel: 07746828279

Sunday Club Leadership Team

Tracy Curle (3-11yrs)
tel: (01506) 207294
Paul Davidson (Bible Class 12-14yrs)
tel: (01506) 670075

Trish Archibald (YF S3-S6)
tel: 07746828279

Boys' Brigade

Jamie McIntosh
tel: 07719163006

Safeguarding

Andy Tunncliffe
tel: 07961521919
Alison Tunncliffe
tel: 07812062899

Bereavement Support Group

Sheila Rae
tel: (01506) 847538

Events Coordinator

Stephen Blake
tel: (01506) 822603

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Dear Crosswind Reader,

I'm writing to you today to ask for your help.

We're working in partnership with Seiko (yes the watch people – but they make precision optics too) to introduce a new kind of varifocal. I'm sure you've heard all kinds of stories about people struggling with or even failing with varifocal spectacles. Well Seiko have developed a new lens, PrimeX, which uses the latest technology to make varifocals much easier to use.

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