

April, 2015

From the Manse

Dear Friends,

As I write this, the Prime Minister of Israel and his Party have secured another term in Office. Apparently a record.

His aim is apparently to strengthen Israel's defences by pouring money into them. The difficulty is that a solution to the problem of peace between the competing nations is as far away as ever.

Susan and I have been on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land on two occasions without any difficulties. However, two little incidents gave us a brief insight into the underlying problems.

The coach driver was a Palestinian Arab and our guide was a Christian Arab. We were there towards the end of Ramadan, at which time the driver ate nothing during daylight hours. On the face of it, the driver and our guide got on well together, and I wondered what happened if there was any trouble between them personally during a time of disturbance. The guide told me that the differences between them were accentuated and became a source of difficulty between them.

The second slight difficulty arose when our guide had to leave our coach and make his own way home because Palestinians were not allowed to pass through this particular check point.

Two little examples of how life could be difficult for those who were trying to get on with their life.

It seems to me that this continuing aggravation between Arabs, Jews and Christians is seen at its worst during times of disturbance. I find this to be a great sadness in a place of worship of the three major world religions.

In a couple of weeks we will be celebrating Holy Week, in particular Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

The washing of the Disciples' feet and the celebration of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday remind us that Christ came to serve us. He took the bread and wine and celebrated that first Holy Communion and told his disciples to remember him.

On Good Friday we will look to the cross as we remember Christ's sacrifice so that we might have life forever. On Easter Sunday we will celebrate Christ's rising from the dead.

Easter is the most important time in the life of the Church and Christ is with us as we go forward to do his bidding. I pray that the nations will find a way forward to their own difficulties and will follow Christ in their quest for peace.

May the peace of Christ be with you this Easter.

Arthur Sherratt



Retiral of our Organist/Choirmistress

The end of an era has been reached with the retiral of our much-loved organist and choir mistress – Joan Gordon.

At the organ for over thirty-five years – one third of the life of this beautiful place of worship - Joan was already involved in the music of St. Cuthbert's as a much-valued member of the alto section of our choir. Her remarkable prowess at the organ became apparent in 1969 when she accompanied the then current organist, Lex Dunlop, while he conducted the congregation during a number of Songs of Praise recordings. Some of the senior members may recall her playing in Landsborough Trinity Church prior to taking up her position here.

She was appointed in 1979 near the end of the ministry of Rev. George Balls and continued to serve in her role for Rev. John Johnston, Rev. Brian Oxburgh and Rev. Arthur Sherratt.

Until this recent period of ill health, Joan rarely has been absent from her seat at the organ, and days off and holidays were few and far between.

During her reign, the tradition of musical excellence associated with St. Cuthbert's Church has been maintained and sustained and, with the continued support of the choir, she has presented the regular Sunday anthems and occasional introits.

One of her lasting legacies will be the memorable Annual Charity Concerts produced in association with the Ardrossan and Saltcoats Rotary Club. With her numerous musical contacts in the Three Towns area, Joan was able to recruit additional singers to augment our choir for these large and popular events. A considerable number of her former students, many of whom have made professional careers at

home and abroad, have returned to perform to support Joan's efforts and express their gratitude for her instruction and guidance in their early years. Four years ago many of these individuals and choristers reassembled to present a "surprise" concert to celebrate her 80th birthday. Rotary recognised and honoured her contribution towards their charity fund-raising by making her a Paul Harris Fellow.

Over the years, choir members have, with Joan's encouragement, taken part in musical occasions in Glasgow Cathedral, St. Giles, Paisley Abbey and Ayr organised by the Royal School of Church Music, as well as smaller, less formal presentations in South Beach House and in the locality.

During her teaching career she has introduced many young people to singing, piano and organ-playing and we in St. Cuthbert's have been privileged to benefit from the fruits of her labour with performances at concerts or little afternoon recitals.

Joan became an accomplished organist at an early age and has often recalled cycling for many years from Skelmorlie to play at morning service in Fairlie Church. Can't imagine many youngsters finding that too appealing nowadays! This would suggest that she has been organ-playing for well in excess of sixty years.

Her infectious passion for music has been spread far and wide and, on occasions during morning service, the congregation has experienced her in full teacher mode exhorting them to "give it laldy" while encouraging the Sunday School to sing it again – "I'm sure you can sing much louder than that!"

Although the organist is partially hidden, gathering on Sunday mornings, members immediately knew who was

playing as few can quite make the rafters ring like Joan can with the sound from that marvellous instrument.

There cannot be many more loyal and devoted servants to our church, and Joan will be a hugely difficult and near-impossible act to follow.

We send her our thanks, our prayers, and our love and best wishes in her retirement.



Presentation

There is an understandable mood within the congregation that recognition should be made of Joan's long service. Members are invited to contribute if they wish in an envelope marked "Joan" and place it in the collection plate or at the door during the month of April.



World Day of Prayer

This year the World Day of Prayer was held in St. Cuthbert's and was well supported by our own members and those from the other churches.

Representatives from the seven churches took part in the service - written by the women of the Bahamas. The organist was Jim Grant, and William Parker the soloist.

The service was enjoyed by all who attended and took part. The ladies of The Guild provided a much-appreciated afternoon tea, which was shared by all who waited on at the end of service.

This is a good way to share fellowship with those from the other churches in Saltcoats. Next year the Baptist church will host the service.

Evelyn Slater
The Guild



Sunday School

As you will be aware, the children have been busy with craft work which produced the bookmarks given out on Mother's Day: all their own work!

As Easter draws near, we have been learning about the Last Supper and the Easter story. For the Women's World Day of Prayer, the children completed artwork illustrating verses given to us by Marion Mitchell. Please do take a look as we have some budding artists!

There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday. We wish everyone a happy Easter.

Sunday School Teachers



The Guild

The present session is now drawing to a close. Our last meeting was most enjoyable, with David Castelvecci from the Rowantree Garden Centre talking about growing plants. We found this very helpful, with gardening queries being answered. He also demonstrated how to make a beautiful floral arrangement from common shrubs in our gardens and with just a few flowers – it looked so easy!

Our next meeting is on 25th March – the Annual Business Meeting. Do come along as we will be planning our outing for 22nd April.

The Guild Presbyterial Council Annual Business Meeting is to be held at 2 p.m. on 14th April in Fairlie Parish Church. Do come along and meet the Guild ladies from the other parish churches.

We wish you all a very happy Easter.

Sheila Sarginson



Spring Coffee Morning

The Spring Coffee Morning on Saturday, 14th March, was a huge success.

Sincere thanks to everyone who supported this event. The amount raised has now reached £1,023.

Fund-raising Team

Quiz Night

A Quiz Night has been organised by Tom Sommerville for Thursday, 16th April in the church hall at 7.30 p.m. A light supper will be provided after the quiz. Tickets are now available at £5 each.

Fund-raising Team



Girls' Brigade

As mentioned in last month's magazine, I bring you the results of our participation in the Division Bible Competition.

I am delighted to say that the team of Emma McKeachan (Junior), Olivia Dougall (Junior) and Lesley Kennedy (Brigader) returned home with a second-place Certificate. The girls had to read and learn Acts, Chapter 9, the Conversion of Saul, and answer questions on this passage. They also took part in a round-robin quiz on general Bible knowledge. We have added the certificate to our notice board.

We will be stopping for the Easter holidays on Tuesday, 31st March, and resume on 21st April, 2015.

Lorna Hamilton



Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding Training for new volunteers and those wishing update training will take place as follows:-

Date: Saturday, 18th April, 2015
Time: 9.45 a.m. registration for prompt start at
10 a.m. until 1 p.m.
Venue: Ardrossan & Saltcoats Kirkgate Parish
Church, Saltcoats

Anyone wishing to attend the above training, please contact me on 01294 464294 by Sunday, 12th April, 2015.

Maureen Crilley
Safeguarding Co-ordinator



Cleaning Rota

Fri. 3 Apr. - Sheena Love, Agnes Algie
Sat./Sun.
11 Apr. - Anita Gillespie, John Campbell
Sat. 18 Apr. - Elizabeth Barclay, Liz Sutherland
Fri. 24 Apr. - Maureen Crilley, Elaine Ramsay
Sat. 2 May - Susan Cross, Nan Smith
Fri. 8 May - Sheila Hanlon, Elizabeth Murray
Sun. 17 May - Gillian Morrison, Shona Turner
Fri. 22 May - Ena Grove, Muriel Parker
Fri. 29 May - Sheila Hanlon, Christine Saunders

If any of the above dates are not suitable, please feel free to swap with someone else or, alternatively, contact me.

Ann Turner



Church Flowers

April

- 5 - Gail Gray in memory of Mrs. Preston
- 12 - Liz Sutherland
- 19 - Gillian Morrison
- 26 - Jessie Brown

Many thanks to those who have donated church flowers.
It is much appreciated.

Anita Gillespie and Joyce White
Flower Convenors



Crackpot Beauty

There was once an old lady who had to take a long walk every day to fetch water from a nearby stream. She collected the water in two pots that were strung on either end of a long pole that she carried across her shoulders. One of the pots had a small crack in it but the other was just

perfect. At the end of her daily walk, she always arrived home with just one-and-a-half pots of water as the cracked pot had slowly dripped out its contents all the way home.

The handsome perfect pot became very big-headed about the wonderful job it did, while the cracked pot became more and more miserable.

After months and months of failing to return home with a full quota of water, the cracked pot finally spoke up:

"I'm so sorry, I don't know why you don't throw me out, I leak so badly that I only ever manage to bring home half the water".

Then the old lady smiled: *"Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path and, every day as we return home, you water them. For months I've been picking beautiful, fragrant flowers for our kitchen table. Without you being just the way you are, we wouldn't have this beauty to grace our house".*

None of us are quite perfect: in fact, it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. So look for the best in everyone and everything and, to all the crackpots reading this, have a great day and don't forget to stop and smell the flowers along your path!

From *Weeds & Wonders* by Anna Caddy & Judith Merrell
TLM Trading Ltd. 2011, 2013



Plants available:

Blue Ageratum (6)
White Alyssum (8)
Antirrhinum – dwarf (8)
Bacopa (single)
Brachycome [Swan River
Daisy] (6)
Bedding Begonia (6)
Busy Lizzie (4)
Dwarf Dahlia (6)
Trailing Fuchsia (single)
Fuchsia (single)
Godetia (8)
Geranium [mixed] (single)
Geranium [red] (single)
Geranium [pink] (single)
Geranium [pink /lilac ivy leaf]
(single) – limited supply
Geranium [white] (single)
Trailing Lobelia [mixed, dark
blue, white] (10)
Ordinary Lobelia [dark blue,
white] (10)
Climbing Petunia (single)
French Marigold (8)
Tagetes (6)
Livingstone Daisy (12)
Mimulus (4)
Nemesia (8)
Nicotiana (6)
Pansy (12)
Petunia [all mixed colours]
(12)
Trailing Petunia [purple, dark
pink and lilac double] (single
pots)

Salvia [red] (6)
Gazania (single)
Stock (6)
Sweet Pea [tall (single) -
trailing] (3)
Upright Verbena (4)
Viola (6) – limited supply
Tomato [bush and tall]
Cosmos (single pot of 10+
plants) – tall and medium
varieties
Whitcorn Flower, Nasturtium,
Foxglove, Aubretia, Trailing
Verbena, Diascia
Flat-leaf Parsley, Dill, Basil,
Rosemary

Prices

Geranium, Trailing Petunia,
Tomatoes, Diascia, Fuchsia,
Bacopa, Trailing Verbena:
75p - £1 (6 for £5)
Sweet Peas: 50p. each tube
(at least 2 plants) - £5 per
dozen. Large Ivy Leaf
Geranium, Large Trailing
Petunia, Large Fuchsia: £2 or
£3, depending on size.
Petunia, Livingstone Daisy,
Pansy: £3 per pack,
Cosmos : £3
3, 4, 6, 8 and 10 packs: all
£1.50. Large pots of
seedlings: £2 - £3.

Plant Sale - Order Form

This year the plant sale will be held on Saturday, 9th May, at 2.00 p.m.

Help on the day of the sale and to transport plants on Friday, 8th May, will be most appreciated.

The list of plants included in this issue will be available and can be ordered anytime before the sale. Any plants ordered can be collected or delivered at a mutually suitable time, either before or after the sale (by 22nd May at the latest).

Ann Turner,

2 Keir Hardie Drive, Ardrossan, KA22 8PA

Tel: 01294 462834



Church Register

Baptism

March - Harry Thomas, son of Mr. & Mrs. Darren Young,
Dundee

Material for the MAY edition of the magazine will be due on Sunday, 19th APRIL, 2015.

Weekly Programme

Mondays:	2.00 p.m. - Afternoon club for beginners', improvers bridge, crafts, etc. 7.30 p.m. - Country Dancing (a social dancing class)
Tuesdays:	10.30 a.m. - Informal mid-week service 6.00 p.m. – Girls' Brigade
Wednesdays:	10.30 a.m. - Keep Fit Class 2.00 p.m. (fortnightly) – The Guild
Thursdays:	9.30 a.m. - Mother and Toddler Group
Fridays:	6.00 p.m. – Boys' Brigade