

March, 2015

From the Manse

Dear Friends,

Things were not going well in the early church. If the dispute had been reported in some newspapers, it would no doubt have attracted lurid headlines but Luke telling the story in the early Church simply writes that there was a quarrel in the Church (Acts 6: 1 - 7).

Things were not going smoothly. Greek-speaking Christians felt they weren't getting fair shares. The apostles took the complaint seriously and listened.

Then they consulted, talking to everyone. They defined priorities: prayer, preaching and service. They gave clear responsibilities to particular people so that everyone knew who did what.

So far, it sounds like a manual on good management.

And the proposals were acceptable to everybody. It worked. It was good management.

When I read these words from Luke, the first thing I notice is that disagreement can happen anywhere and everywhere.

If it happened in the Spirit-filled Jerusalem, there is no need to be ashamed when it happens today.

The important thing is to handle it the way they did - not to pretend that it doesn't exist but to bring it out in the open so that it can be looked at, prayed about, and talked through.

The second thing is that disagreement is not necessarily damaging or divisive.

It can be, if it's ignored until it builds up into a crisis where everyone is fighting from fixed positions.

In this story, though, it's dealt with positively, sympathetically, flexibly.

In this story, there is a willingness to change, to listen to the other point of view and a fair solution. A virtue later Christians haven't always had!

It was when I was thinking about current events and how difficult it was to find a solution, I came to the passage from Acts 6:1 - 7.

Here we find that the Greek Christians complaining that their widows are not getting a fair share of the funds set apart for them.

It struck me that, at this very moment of time, the Greek Government is complaining because they are unable to pay their debts and there seems to be little chance that they will get what they are looking for.

In other parts of the world, attempts are being made to find a solution to various armed conflicts. It appears that everyone seems to have a right to the same area of land because they once owned it.

Surely we can take a leaf from the example of the early Greek Christians and find amicable ways forward through discussion and negotiation.

Our world deserves peace.

Arthur Sherratt

Boys' Brigade

The 1st Saltcoats Boys' Brigade Company has now grown to 65 boys, numbering 31 Anchor Boys, 20 Junior Section Boys and 14 Company and Senior Boys. This is now the largest the Company has been in over a decade.

We have been participating in a large number of activities so far this year with some successes. In the pool competition, two of our boys, Scott Lamberton and Graham Bruce, came 1st and 2nd in the under-19s league, and Craig McLellan came 2nd in the under-14s pool league.

Our Junior Section football team is also doing well, sitting in third place going into the last leg of the tournament.

In the badminton competition, Patric Hollywood came 3rd in the Primary 6 tournament and, in the Anchor Boys drawing competition, Lewis Mulgrew came 3rd in the Primary 1 boys.

We have also participated in other activities this session. In October, we took both the Junior and Company section boys to the Ardrossan Fire Station and we have also taken the Junior section to the Transport Museum in Glasgow. Also in November we carried out a collection for the North Ayrshire Foodbank, which collected fifteen boxes of food.

The Company also now has new football strips for the Junior section, sponsored by TCs Something Different Clothing, Shoes and Collectables; new football strips for the Company section sponsored by Boyd Bros. Skip Hire, and waterproof jackets for use at all competitions sponsored by Gregor Watson.

We still have several months of the current session to run before the display in May so we have many more events still planned.

If anyone is interested in joining the Company or wishes more information, we meet in the church hall from 6 - 9.30 p.m. every Friday.

Gordon Cunningham
Company Captain



The Guild

World Day of Prayer - This is being held in our church at 2 p.m. on Friday, 6th March. We are hoping for good support from our church members. The service is open to men and women so please come along. It will be followed by tea and home-baking in the church hall.

Our next Guild meeting is 11th March and is an open meeting: we extend a welcome to all gardeners. Mr. David Castelvecci, from the *Rowantree Garden Centre* on the main road to West Kilbride, will be coming to talk to us and, no doubt, answer any questions we might have about our plants. Do come along - especially the men-folk - don't be shy, as you will be made most welcome. We hope to have a good turn-out at this meeting which starts at 2 p.m., followed by tea.

There is to be a talk at 2 p.m. on 19th March at Mansefield Trinity Church, Kilwinning. This will be on the *Heart for Art Project* and hosted by the Presbyterial Council.

Our Annual Business Meeting will be at 2 p.m. on 25th March.

Sheila Sarginson



Youth Group

Since taking over the Youth Group, I have been getting to know the youngsters and they are a fantastic group of talented young people.

Since return in January, they have written great religious acrostic poems and built their own amazing creative structures from sugar cubes. We have also been learning the books of the Bible and will be moving on next to look at the Ten Commandments.

If anyone is interested in viewing their work, please feel free to drop in at the Youth Group room and have a look at their display board.

Diane Lambert



Spring Coffee Morning

It is planned to have a Spring Coffee Morning in the church hall on Saturday, 14th March, at 10 a.m.

There will be a variety of stalls available which will include an Easter Egg hunt and egg-decorating for the children; tea, coffee and delicious home-baking - and you will also be able to purchase this home-baking. It is also planned to hold an Easter Bonnet competition for children and adults, so please join in the fun!

We will be happy to accept donations for the baking stall and anything coloured yellow for the 'sunshine' stall.

Tickets will cost £3 for adults - children going free - and this will go towards church funds.

Fund-raising Team



Plant Sale

The Plant Sale this year will be held on Saturday, 9th May, at 2 p.m.

A list of available plants will appear in next month's magazine, and order forms ready early in April.

Ann Turner

Girls' Brigade

Since the start of the year, the girls have been completing the last of their badge work, the final part being Rambling, and we plan to visit the RSPB in Lochwinnoch very soon.

We are also into competition times and, as usual, we are participating in them all. The Brigader Section are currently taking part in a National competition which is a Nail Art competition. The girls have to design a set of nails on the theme 'Fashion Shoes'. The prize for the winning entry will be a visit to a nail bar to have their nails professionally painted.

On Saturday, 20th February, the following girls attended the Division competitions in Kilmarnock and I am proud to say that we returned home with a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place:

Explorers, Katie McQuistin and Rosie Curran (2nd); Juniors, Olivia Dougal and Haylie Rout (1st); Brigaders, Eleanor Roy, Leah Curran and Paige Doyle (3rd). The theme was Chinese New Year and the Explorers had to use chopsticks to move *Maltesers* from one bowl to the next. Juniors made fans, and the Brigaders created origami frogs. The girls are unaware of what they have to make or do until they arrive at the competitions. The Certificates and items can be seen on our notice-board.

Grateful thanks are due to Mrs. Dougal and Mr. McQuistin for their assistance with transport.

On the 6th of March we will take part in the Bible Knowledge competition, and results will be posted in due course.

Lorna Hamilton



Cleaning Rota

- Fri. 6 Mar. - Elizabeth Murray, Sheila Hanlon
Sun. 15 Mar. - Gillian Morrison, Shona Turner
Fri. 20 Mar. - Ena Grove, Muriel Parker
Fri. 27 Mar. - Sheila Hanlon, Christine Saunders
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

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

March

- 1 - Sheena Love
8 - Ann Turner
15 - Muriel Parker
22 - Janette Mumford
29 - Pat Hoyland

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

Anita Gillespie and Joyce White
Flower Convenors

What is a Grandparent?

(Taken from papers written by a class of 8-year-olds):-

Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other people's.

A grandfather is a man, and a grandmother is a lady!

Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them.

They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run. It is good if they drive us to the shops and give us money.

When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars.

They show us and talk to us about the colours of the flowers and also why we shouldn't step on 'cracks.'

They don't say, "Hurry up".

Usually grandmothers are fat but not too fat to tie your shoes.

They wear glasses and funny underwear and can take their teeth and gums out.

Grandparents don't have to be smart.

When they read to us, they don't skip. They don't mind if we ask for the same story over again.

Everybody should try to have a grandmother, especially if you don't have television because they are the only grownups who like to spend time with us.

They know we should have a snack time before bed time, and they say prayers with us and kiss us even when we've acted naughty.

Grandpa is the smartest man on earth! He teaches me good things, but I don't get to see him enough so that I can get as smart as him!

It's funny when they bend over; you hear gas leaks, and they blame their dog.



Church Register

Deaths

- Feb. - Mr. H. McCulloch, South Beach House, formerly Headrigg Gardens.
Mrs. M. Stevely, Canal Street - Parish Funeral
Mrs. McGookin, Saltcoats - Parish Funeral

Baptism

- Feb. - James Nairn William, son of Mr. & Mrs. J. Laughlan, Oakbank Road, Perth

Material for the APRIL edition of the magazine will be due on Sunday, 22nd MARCH, 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