

Saltcoats St Cuthbert's Church Magazine

Our memorials to the fallen



Lest we forget

November 2021

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From the Minister.

The autumn months are following the usual busy pattern of previous years. Harvest Thanksgiving and Communion have been celebrated. Blythswood Shoe Boxes have been filled and are on their way to bring some Christmas love and happiness to families, mostly in Eastern Europe. Crossreach Christmas cards have been ordered. Remembrance Sunday, St. Andrew's Day and Advent embrace us in November.

We have been delighted to see the children back in Sunday School, and we have welcomed Margaret, Helen, Amy and Megan as the new team co-ordinating their learning and activities. The after-service fellowship over coffee and tea has brought some of the congregation together after the service. The Monday Group has restarted, some members being busy with various crafts while others test their skills with Bridge, and all of us enjoying the fellowship of chattering over tea and coffee.

This particular autumn has also seen the start of discussions about the Presbytery Mission Plan. Elsewhere in the magazine you can read reports from the introductory session held by Presbytery for representatives from every congregation and from our own Kirk Session's recent discussion. At some point between November and January every Kirk Session will be visited by a team from the Presbytery to discuss the options ahead of us.

We are also aware of the wider discussions being held in Glasgow this November, with representatives from nearly 200 nations seeking ways to reduce Carbon emissions and slow down the 'progression' of climate change. Alongside the official speeches, discussions and decision-making, there are various events happening across Glasgow and other places in Scotland and further afield to coincide with this important international conference. We may not want to participate in person with events in the big cities – due to probable travel congestion as well as concerns about COVID transmission in such a big international gathering. However, some areas are organising local events, or there is even the possibility of 'virtual marches' helping us identify with others expressing their concerns.

There is a 'Big Sing' being organised by the Iona Community outside the Scottish Parliament Building on Saturday 6th November. My suggestion following our chat in the 'informal time' in the service on 24th October is that we dedicate our service on 7th November as a 'Big Sing' around the theme of God's beautiful creation and our part in caring for it. Less words from me; more words from the congregation hymn-singing! Sounds good! Hopefully, we will also have paper boats made by the younger ones and all of us who feel young at heart! Christian Aid has suggested this activity as part of its encouragement of churches to get involved in the issues around COP26. Check out their website by searching for "Christian Aid rise to the moment".

Enjoy / be inspired – and in the midst of the challenges of the pandemic - keep safe and protect each other as far as you are able. Pray for the vulnerable and those at the frontline in the NHS and Care Sector, in Education and Scientific Research, in Global Institutions and Charities trying to bring vaccinations and treatment to those who do not have the resources we benefit from in our land. Pray for political, industrial and business leaders, that we might recapture something of that positive spirit which was around nearer the beginning of the pandemic, as we affirmed that we needed to look after each other – locally, nationally and internationally. We are in the same storm, although we are in very different boats! From our luxurious ships, let us not ignore the plight of those on rickety rafts. Please!

With every blessing,

Sarah Nicol.

Church Register

Deaths

Sept. Mrs. J. Gillespie, Caledonia Nursing Home.

Afternoon Club

The Afternoon Club is up and running again.

We meet on Monday afternoons in the main hall 2–4pm.

Anyone who would like to play bridge, do craftwork of any kind or join us for a cup of tea and a chat will be welcome to join us.

Nan Smith

Sunday School

Sunday school are still focusing on prayers for the next few weeks. A few people have been asking if we are still collecting pennies (small change etc) the answer is yes I would be very grateful for any donations that come our way. Thank you to everyone in advance for any support given. The help so far from Helen, Amy and Megan has been brilliant.

Well done team.

Margaret Roberts

A Sunday school teacher's true story:

I was testing younger children in my Sunday school to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven.

I asked them: "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into heaven?" "No!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the garden and kept everything tidy, would that get me into heaven?"

Again, the answer was "No!"

"If I gave sweets to all the children and loved my husband, would that get me into heaven?" Again, they all answered "No!"

I was just bursting with pride for them.

I continued: "Then how do I get into heaven?"

A little boy shouted out: "You've got to be dead."

St. Cuthbert's Sunday School member raises funds for Macmillan nurses



With her mum Claire and Auntie Gill and rest of the family

Naomi (front centre) with mum Claire, Auntie Gill and the rest of the family.

think she isn't listening but she is."

Thanks to kind donations from the local community, the family arranged to borrow an inflatable ice cream truck and a donation of a slushy machine for the kids.

"The donations we got were amazing. Pink Lemon on Facebook, they donated wax melts in the shape of the cancer bow, and they donated a big hamper for the raffle. We also got bottles of wine, smelly stuff, chocolates donated.

"She sold raffle tickets as well. Everybody came together, it was just meant to be friends and family, but it ended up being everybody wanting to help us and offer us things.

"This was turning out bigger than I thought. But it was definitely worth it."

Claire kept the visit from the **Herald** a secret until the big day, as she was worried Naomi would be 'too excited' to sleep.

She continued: "We never told

WHEN nine-year-old Naomi Brogan's auntie Gill got sick, she knew just how much work the Macmillan nurses did to help.

Her mum Claire Roberts spoke to the **Herald** about how proud she was of her daughter showing the initiative to run her own coffee morning. She said: "Her auntie had been going through breast cancer and she just had her last treatment on Thursday.

"She'd been going through radiotherapy and other treatment, so that was what inspired Naomi to want to do something.

"She asked she could do something to help.

"She heard auntie Gill go on about Macmillan nurses and how she speaks to them on the phone and knows they are there for her and the whole family.

"She's nine year old, you



The nine-year-old shows her support for Macmillan

her anything about the inflatables or that a photographer was coming to take pictures.

"She was like 'oh my God, oh my God,' when we revealed it in the morning.

"She has just been absolutely brilliant, she took it all in her stride.

"I was getting overwhelmed

with tears and she was like 'mum, why ye crying!?"

"It was just so emotional when you realise what everyone had done to help."

Overall, Naomi has raised £1,000 for Macmillan and is still taking donations online. Visit: shorturl.at/suzIJ to donate.

Reprinted courtesy of Jennifer Jones at the Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald

CROSS REACH

Care you can put your faith in

The first Christmas card order of this year has been very well received; the final order will be placed at the beginning of November.

Would anyone still wishing to order cards etc. please let me have their order by Wednesday 3rd November.

If you are not coming to church and would like me to collect your order please give me a ring.

Thanks to everyone for their support. I will report the total sales figure next month.

Margaret Kelso

ARDROSSAN PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN

Representing St. Cuthbert's Graeme and Hunter report on a presentation and discussion on the Ardrossan Presbytery Mission Plan.

The Church of Scotland is facing many challenges:-

Falling membership (currently around 300,000)

A lack of ministers (majority in latter years of their ministry, with few being inducted)

Too many buildings, many no longer fit for purpose, or ill-situated for the communities they serve

Financial Instability

In spite of the challenges, there are also opportunities for the Kirk:-

To do things differently and have a church fit for the 21st century.

Because of all this, the General Assembly of 2018 called for a "Radical Action Plan" which was presented in 2019. The General Assembly of 2021 announced a reduction of around 200 Full Time Equivalent Ministry posts; down to 600 with 60 vacancies envisaged. In our presbytery that means we have to implement a reduction from 23.1FTE posts to 13.5. More locally; for the Three Towns this represents a reduction from 6.1 to 3.5 FTE posts.

There is a requirement for all presbyteries to have a Mission Plan produced and in place by the end of 2022, while ministry posts will be reduced to within mandatory limits by the end of 2025.

However, as Ardrossan will be joining with five other presbyteries to form the Presbytery of South West Scotland by September 2022, our plan must be in place by then.

Our Presbytery Mission plan has to be shaped by mission and be in line with the Five Marks of Mission.

The mission of the Church is the Mission of Christ

1. *To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom*
2. *To teach, baptise and nurture new believers*
3. *To respond to human need by loving service*
4. *To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*
5. *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*

The Presbytery Mission Plan Act Guidance is clear: Mission must be the priority, followed by people and congregational structures, with buildings last. Implementation will be by various means and methods to be discussed and agreed upon:-

- ** Unions
- ** Linkages
- ** Deferred Unions or Linkages
- ** Local Mission Church
- ** Guardianship
- ** New Charge
- ** Transportation
- ** Parish Grouping
- ** Dissolution
- ** Team Ministry

The timeline for this is as follows:-

September 2021 - Meeting with Ministers / Deacons / MDS / Interim Moderators . . . and Representatives from Kirk Sessions.

October 2021 - Survey sent to Kirk Sessions for completion.

November 2021 to January 2022 - Visits to Kirk Sessions.

February 2022 - Begin the process of approval of Presbytery Mission Plan.

June 2022 - Fully Completed and approved Presbytery Mission Plan.

Finally we come to buildings:

It is essential we have 'well equipped spaces in the right places' to ensure our buildings are appropriate for mission and worship in the 21st Century.

Presbytery will be working closely with the General Trustees to help determine which buildings should be retained in line with Mission Plan. Each building must be categorized as

- A – to be retained for the lifespan of the Plan
- B - to be disposed of in the lifespan of the plan

With the Presbytery Mission Plan needing to be completed in a relatively short timescale, this is going to be a challenge.

Ardrossan Presbytery fully intends for the Mission Plan to be developed collaboratively and progressed from the grassroots within the parameters given by the General Assembly.

The foregoing information was discussed at a recent meeting of the St. Cuthbert's Church Kirk Session. The following is an extract from the minute of the Q & A session.

Sarah invited questions and comments from attendees and a number of points were made.

a) the view was given that the Church of Scotland is too limited in its ambition and that the proposed Presbytery groupings are too small and artificial in their (geographical) boundaries. We would require a five-year rolling/flexible plan as what is proposed for 2022, for example, may not actually happen right away so adjustments will be required.

b) 'FTE' was further explained and we should not think only in terms of *ministers* to fill salaried posts as MDS are also very important – especially if they focus on a particular topic such as Youth Work, Art, Agriculture, the development of a Virtual Church or Training for lay members. Training was considered to be particularly vital in view of the significant number of ministers who are due to retire in the next few years

c) it was also felt that elders are being expected to carry out an increasingly heavy load and others should contribute in different ways.

d) the Local Church Review is in abeyance so the size of congregations and their activities (or lack of) are not being judged at present.

e) a suggestion had been made that the Guilds of St Cuthbert's, Kirkgate and the North Parish Church should come together for joint meetings etc as this would provide benefits in terms of numbers when speakers have been invited etc. This was considered to be a good idea as it would foster closer relationships between congregations and encourage other joint activities – although this already happens, to varying degrees, with the Afternoon Group, the Bridge Group, the Community Café (unfortunately still on hold) and Bible Study.

f) the idea was expressed that a completely new, modern, flexible building was required for Saltcoats. Older buildings like St Cuthbert's could not be adapted very well for different uses in the future. Others expressed the view that it was better to redevelop the existing building. The view was also expressed that the church is no longer in the centre of the population it now serves so perhaps it could be consolidated with other churches and smaller 'satellite' churches could be created in local areas as these would be more useful, popular and relevant for their community.g) a feasibility study should be carried out to identify what the community actually *wants* from its church – although if the grant for the tower is not secured, it might not be feasible to retain the building.

h) more young people are needed to secure the future of the church, although it was uncertain how such young people could be attracted. How to find out what they want from the church today? How to attract families back to the church? We need to expand out to other areas and learn from them! We need a minimum of three congregations in the three towns to ensure we have the critical mass of people required to survive and move forward!

One suggestion was that the churches in the Three Towns could be served by two parish ministers with the remaining 1.5 FTE being a Families Outreach Worker and Youth Worker. A 0.5 FTE appointment might be able to work with churches in other groupings to be fully employed.

Sunday	Nov 7 Raymond Montgomerie	Dec 5 Simon Hales
Readers	14 Graeme Sutherland	12 Ann Turner
	21 Annita Gillespie	19 Sunday School
	28 Maureen Crilley	26 Choir Members

Many thanks to all who volunteer. If any given date proves unsuitable, please arrange a swap from this list and please let me know. If anyone would like to join the rota of readers, that would be wonderful! Please speak to me at the close of a service or by phoning or emailing me.

Sarah.

Parkers Preserves



After 10 years the “Production Line” is showing signs of fatigue!
As a result it is likely that the output next year will be reduced. I am grateful to everyone who supported my efforts this year with contributions of fruit or sugar but most especially to those who made purchases. Church funds will receive £525.
Although the bramble and raspberry preserves are sold out there are still a few jams and chutneys available.

Muriel Parker

My Living Will

Last night my kids and I were sitting in the living room and I said to them, “I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle.

If that ever happens, just pull the plug.”

They got up, unplugged the computer and threw out my wine!!

Little darlings!



Hope yet?