



'Our Kirk Matters'

Holytown Parish Church

June 2024

The theme chosen by **The Rt Revd Dr Shaw J Paterson** for his year as **Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland** is



'Building Together' as the Church seeks to strengthen its foundations amid change. He states *"We're a Church together and we need to go forward together to build on the foundations of all our forebearers."*

*Do please come along to hear Shaw preach at Holytown
on Sunday 23rd June 2024 at 10 am.*



Our vision is to be a living, caring Church at the heart of our communities – celebrating worship, offering support, giving a welcome and sharing the good news of Jesus.



You are invited to Holy Communion

HOLYTOWN PARISH CHURCH

Sunday 23rd June 2024 at 10 am

"Do this in remembrance of me."

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland's visit

On Sunday 23rd June, the Church Elders and congregation will be truly honoured to have the newly appointed Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, The Rt Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson conducting our service of worship & Holy Communion.



As recorded in our November 2023 edition of the magazine, Shaw is originally from our village here in Holytown where his Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather were Elders within our congregation and had their own building company. Rt Rev Dr Paterson said *"One of the themes I'd like to have for my year as Moderator is building together"* and this goes back to his roots.

We as a congregation are very proud of Shaw and his achievements to-date. We were delighted and privileged to learn that he wished as Moderator to conduct morning worship in Holytown.

For this special occasion, we have invited by letter, representatives from our local cluster groups and Churches within the Bellshill, Airdrie & Motherwell area.

We would encourage you to attend on this day and for those who wish, a light buffet lunch will follow within our Hall after the service.

To manage attendance and catering it would be helpful if you could please complete the link below <https://forms.office.com/r/Ut88zW0S5B> or simply call or text to let us know approximate numbers attending.



Responses To:	Christine Duns	Christine.duns@gmail.com 07900 551036
	Irene Gilchrist	Irene.gilchrist1949.111@gmail.com 07563546772

From, The Rev Terence C Moran BD; Cert Min
South Wishaw Parish Church
Interim Moderator,
Holytown & New Stevenston, Wrangholm



*11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." **Matthew 5:11-12***

Dear brothers and sisters,

There was never a time in my life that I remember when I did not want to be a minister, although there have been many times that I have questioned my sanity in becoming one. You see, like the old joke that a minister only works one day a week, I thought being a minister was mainly about conducting a service on a Sunday morning when people would come to church to learn more about Jesus and then visiting them during the week to encourage, comfort and/or console them.

Throughout my training, some 30 years ago now, I realised that there were many aspects of a ministers' role that I was not being well prepared for, especially by the minister I was working with as a probationer, who saw me less as a colleague than as someone to do the visits he did not want to do. I learned nothing from him regarding managing the workload of a minister and the politics and processes that often make things much more difficult than they should be. A change of supervising minister helped, mostly because he was struggling with those very things that weigh many ministers down and lead to burn out, and he would talk them through with me. What these two ministers did have in common though was that neither of them had the blue print for dealing with problems to the satisfaction of all of those involved because, as I have learned through painful experience, there is no such thing.

Sadly, many of my colleagues tell me they are desperate to retire and as soon as they do they say they will leave the Church of Scotland, such has been their experience of trying to manage the business, the organisational structures, and the personalities and problems that are thrown up. And all while trying to hold on to their own faith and (here's that word again) sanity. It makes me think of that old joke from Groucho Marx, 'There ain't no Sanity Clause!' And there certainly isn't, at least not that I noticed in any of the vows I took when I became a minister.

The fact is that we all sign up as Christians to face persecution for the sake of the gospel. The unfortunate thing is that most of it seems to come from within the body of Christ rather than from outwith. For many that is the way they feel about all of the changes that are planned for our Presbytery in the coming few months. So what can we do about it? Well firstly, in the words of the old hymn, we can 'take it to the Lord in prayer', asking for the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit in dealing with any persecution we face, perceived or real, which distracts or prevents us from playing our full part in the work of his Kingdom. Secondly, as we enter into this new season in the life of the church, we can take up the challenge of considering how our own attitudes and behaviours may engender a feeling of persecution in others, and addressing those things which are within our power to change/control.

Cont/....

What better opportunity to do both of these things than in the communion service at Holytown on Sunday 23rd June conducted by the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Rt Rev Shaw Paterson, a local lad made good, whose sanity in taking up that position of responsibility at this difficult time it is not for me to question. I do, however, wish Shaw well in his Moderatorial year and wish you all well as you face together the challenges that lie ahead.

Your brother in Christ,
Terry Moran
11/06/2024

From Mr Bill Hastings, Locum

Show your age folks, do you remember the advert "It's good to talk", I think it is good to talk to our Lord in prayer and also to each other, as you know my policy is tell folk when they can hear you, some of the things that are happening in our church here at Holytown it would seem the powers that be are not listening when was the last time you took time to say to our Lord – Thank You for all our blessings, if we look at the world we are living in the way our possible leaders are fighting with each other, yes I know I have often said 'leave it in Gods hands' but with our faith as strong as it is lets leave it in Gods hands. He created this world and I truly believe he will have a plan, think about it maybe he is testing our faith in him.



Let me quote Hebrews chap. 11 verse 1.

"To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see."

Can I say thank you for your continued support at this time. May each of us feel the presence of the living Lord as we do our best for Him.

Bill Hastings,
Locum.

Sunday Readers 2024

We warmly invite all members of the congregation to contribute to the service by volunteering to read from scripture during the service. Should you wish to do so, please contact our Locum Bill Hastings or one of the Elders. Plenty of notice is always given for you to prepare in advance for the reading that is chosen.



People must allow themselves to be led by the Holy Spirit

Published on 19 May 2024

People must put "more trust and faith" in God and allow themselves to be led by the Holy Spirit as Jesus's disciples were.

That is the message from the new Moderator of the General Assembly to mark Pentecost, which commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and other followers of the light of the world, marking the beginning of the Church.



Delivering a sermon at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh today, Rt Rev Dr Shaw Paterson said: "We must allow the Spirit to transform us that we might truly be one in Christ, and that together we can build on the foundations of our Lord and Saviour."

The theme of the Moderator's year in office is Building Together as the Church seeks to move forward in unity after passing major reforms to address a shortage of ministers, a decline in membership numbers and dwindling finances.

Dr Paterson said: "Maybe we need to put more trust and faith in our sisters and brothers that collectively we move away from our focus being on what once was, and allow ourselves to be led by the spirit into the future.

"Into what might be and may be, no wait, there is no maybe about it, we must allow the Holy Spirit to use us as the disciples did.

"It transformed them, we must allow the Spirit to transform us that we might truly be one in Christ, and that together we can build on the foundations of our Lord and Saviour."

Holy Spirit

Dr Paterson told the congregation, which included His Grace, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly, that the Holy Spirit ensures that the tradition of the Church won't be consumed and left as ashes.

"The Church may change, traditions may change, styles of worship may change but just as our motto which surrounds a burning bush says, faith will continue to be passed from one generation to the next," he added.

"That's something we need to hold on to.

"Through us, through the Holy Spirit working in us, faith will continue to be passed from one generation to the next."



The Moderator greets the Duke of Edinburgh outside St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh while Principal Clerk Rev Fiona Smith and Rev Dr George Whyte look on.

Dr Paterson has taken a sabbatical from his role as minister of Trinity Parish Church in Strathaven, South Lanarkshire, where he has served for 33 years, and is a former clerk of the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale.

He has been at the heart of Presbytery Mission Planning, aimed at ensuring the Church is properly equipped to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in the decades ahead.

Dr Paterson said: "We would all like to see our own particular church buildings stay open.

"We would all like to see 3,000 people added to our numbers after the sermon as happened on the day of Pentecost but we have to be realistic.

"I don't want to rehearse the messages of previous (General) Assemblies but we, in terms of the church, live in difficult times.

"We have to be realistic about the size of the Church and the number of buildings we have but today, on the Day of Pentecost, we need to believe that with God all things are possible.

"Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, all things are possible.

Building Together

"For too long we have sat back watching and waiting for signs of God's Spirit being at work in our world."

Dr Paterson said God calls "each and every one of us".

"We've all got a calling but unless we respond to God's Call, unless we allow God to use us, will anything ever change?" he asked.

"There can hardly be a minister, or an elder or a church member that hasn't got a little bit down thinking about past glories, where we are at present and what the future will be.

"In response to this I have adopted as my catch phrase or logo, theme or whatever you want to call it – 'Building Together'.

"Building the church of Jesus Christ together with the Holy Spirit and with each other.

'Our Kirk Matters'

Holytown Parish Church

"When we think of the church of tomorrow, we need to remember not bricks and stone laid by human hand.

"Yes, these have been laid to glorify God, but our faith is built on Jesus Christ.

"Our foundations are set much deeper than anything we can dig ourselves, our faith is built upon Christ.

"We need to build together, we need to work together."



The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

Free Summary, General Assembly 2024 as published in Life & Work

‘A FRESH VISION’ The Convener of the Church of Scotland’s Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (FAPLT) has told the General Assembly that the Church needs ‘a fresh vision’. The Rev Tommy MacNeil said that the Church continues to do ‘truly remarkable work’ but acknowledged that it was ‘in the midst of a deeply challenging and uncertain moment’ as it struggles with shortages of money and ministers, and falling membership. He said: “In our hurt and pain, we need to know Christ as our healer and restorer if we are to have any hope of having a different future.”



REFORMS AND FINANCE The Assembly Trustees were told to bring proposals that will mean the Church is breaking even financially within four years. The motion, introduced by the Rev Scott Rennie, urged the Trustees to bring proposals to next year’s Assembly which will deliver the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities (the national charity which includes the church’s central services, Faith Action programme and CrossReach) a balanced budget by the end of 2027. The instruction followed a report from the Assembly Trustees which warned that, on current trends, the Church’s available reserves will be exhausted by 2032. Mr Rennie said that although the Trustees had made ‘remarkable progress’ so far in delivering reform, he felt the wider Church still did not appreciate the urgency of balancing the budget. Much discussion focused on the fact, revealed in the Trustees’ report, that 71% of charges in the Church do not contribute enough to cover their ministry costs, and are supported by the other 29%. Convener of the Assembly Trustees, the Rev David Cameron, said that it was ‘a key illustration of the challenge we face as a Church’. Mr Cameron said that the majority of the reforms instructed from 2019 had now been delivered, with new presbyteries in place and initial savings targets met at the National Office. However, he said that ‘we have a way to go, because the hard truth is that limited resources are becoming ever scarcer’. The Rev Christopher Rowe, minister in a Priority Areas parish in Milton, Glasgow, said he feared that a review of Priority Areas (the church’s mission to the most deprived 5% of areas in Scotland) was a euphemism for cuts, and called for people experiencing poverty ‘to be at the root of any consultations taking place’.

General Assembly 2024

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024 SUPPLEMENT 2 “Priority to the poorest feels as though it is part of our denominational DNA,” he said. “I want to thank the 29% who support the 71%, because that includes the bottom 5%.” However, there were also calls for the 29% who do pay for their ministries to be protected. The Very Rev Prof David Fergusson said: “Support for the poorest and most remote congregations is necessary and desirable, but it was never envisaged that this number would include 71% of our charges. The 29% are crucial to our future.” The Assembly passed an Overture from the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders which will reduce the national church’s influence over presbytery mission plans. The rules agreed in recent years had stated that the review and development of mission plans must be approved annually by FAPLT and the General Trustees. Under the Overture, those bodies must be consulted but approval will only be needed every five years. Another Overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow, asking for churches to be given permission to call ministers even while the Presbytery was over its allocation (due to ministers in unrestricted tenure being reluctant to move), was defeated. The Assembly passed an amendment to the rules of the Seeds for Growth fund which will allow it to be accessed for work in existing congregations, as well as new worshipping communities. There were also calls for the reform of the General Assembly itself after it was revealed that the estimated cost to the Church of this year’s gathering is over £800,000 (including staff costs and Commissioners’ expenses). The Rev Dr Alan Hamilton said that it could be done ‘twice as effectively at half the cost’. The convener of the Assembly Business Committee, the Rev Michael Mair, pledged that budgets would be looked at as part of conversations about the future of the Assembly.

There were several comments on behalf of the newly-qualified ministers who have been serving as assistant ministers under special arrangements while churches have not been allowed to call during the presbytery mission planning process. Those arrangements are expected to come to an end in 2027. One of those affected, the Rev Douglas Reid, said: “There is a great deal of anger within the cohort... who feel they may have to look at options for employment outside the Church of Scotland.” The Rev Angus Mathieson, the Presbytery and Partnership Manager, said that with nearly all the mission plans now approved, there would be enough vacancies over the next few years to match the supply of candidates, including the assistant ministers.

MINISTRY TRAINING Significant changes to the education of ministers were agreed which will allow new ministers to qualify through an Apprenticeship Route. The Rev Tommy MacNeil told the Assembly that the proposals would ‘ensure our ministers are better equipped and prepared for the challenges of 21st century secular Scotland’, providing more routes for people into the ministry and speeding up the process from first discernment to ordination. Initial proposals had encountered resistance among the Church’s academic providers, but were changed following discussions. The Rev Professor Alison Jack, Principal of Edinburgh’s New College, said that the University of Edinburgh was ‘deeply committed’ to working with the church to meet its needs in the 21st century.

GAZA AND PALESTINE A young Palestinian Christian told the General Assembly of her heartbreak that she is unlikely to see the land of her ancestors. As the Assembly discussed the sections of the FAPLT report on the situation in Gaza, Joanne Billeh, of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, who lives in Jordan, said that her family had been forced to leave Palestine in the 1948 war. Ms Billeh said: “The chances of me going to see the land that I spent my whole childhood hearing about are slim, which obviously breaks my heart. “I speak on behalf of Jordanians for whom Palestine is a place we only know from photos and stories or our ancestors.” The Assembly passed the sections of the FAPLT Deliverance calling for prayers for peace in Gaza, to share the voices of Palestinian Christians and for the UK Government to recognise the State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel. It added sections calling on FAPLT to ‘publicly and explicitly’ call on the UK Government to call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and to stop granting export licences for weapons to Israel; and one urging them to consider restoring Church of Scotland funding for the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme (EAPPI), which was withdrawn this year.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS The Assembly Trustees are to explore how the Church conducts its external affairs work, and were invited to consider proposals for a new committee to oversee such work. The committee, if agreed, would have responsibility for the Church’s work on social justice, ecumenical and interfaith relations, and work with international partners. Following the reforms since 2019, the work of the former World Mission and Church and Society Councils are now overseen by FAPLT. However the Rev Peter Johnston, who moved the motion, argued: “FAPLT’s remit is too big to be able to manage this vitally important work effectively.”

SOCIAL CARE Members of the Church were urged to lobby their MSPs about the crisis in social care in Scotland. Debating the report of the Social Care Council (CrossReach), the Assembly agreed to ‘express alarm about the cuts to vital care services being experienced by CrossReach The CrossReach Makaton Choir.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024 SUPPLEMENT and other care providers in the social care sector and ask CrossReach, working with FAPLT, to raise awareness about the crisis in social care with Presbyteries and congregations and to make representations to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government’. Convener, the Rev Thom Riddell, said: ‘If we don’t do something about (social care) the whole system is going to collapse’. The Assembly also approved calls for further work on the issue of fair work in social care.

The campaign highlights that average pay in the sector is considerably lower than equivalent positions in the NHS, which makes recruitment and retention of staff harder for organisations like CrossReach.

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE WELCOME The General Assembly approved, and speakers mostly welcomed, the Theological Forum’s report on Transgender People in the Church of Scotland. The convener of the Forum, the Rev Dr Liam Fraser, said: “Despite a wide range of theological and political views being present on the Forum, we are unanimous in reaching the following conclusions. First... we believe that transgender people should be loved, and respected, and welcomed in our congregations. It is the foundation of Christian ethics that all people are made in the image of God, and are worthy of our respect and love, and this is true of transgender people also. “Yet second, and based on our exploration of gender in the Bible, the Forum is also unanimous in believing that transgender people should not only be welcomed into our church, but allowed to serve in our Church... “By focussing on the importance of welcome, and the ability every Christian to be used by God for service, we believe our report offers the Church a route through a debate that has, at times, become toxic, and allows us to model a better way of engaging with issues of gender.” The following day, FAPLT accepted an instruction to consider the implications of the recently-released Cass Review into gender identity services for under 18s.

FORCES CHAPLAINS SHORTAGE The Assembly was warned that the shortage of Church of Scotland ministers serving as military chaplains was ‘now a big issue’. The convener of the committee on Chaplains to HM Forces, the Rev Scott Brown, said: “The issue, and we want to be clear with the Church, is that the Church of Scotland could more or less disappear from the chaplaincies of the three Services. That would, in our view, be a disaster.” The Assembly was also addressed by Air Vice Marshal Tim Jones, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, who spoke of his upbringing in the Boys’ Brigade at St John’s Church, Inverkeithing, without which he said ‘I would not have gone on to do what I have done in my career’. He said that chaplains played a ‘vital role’ in the work of the services: “Let me assure you, friends, that it would simply not be possible to navigate Service life without the ability to talk, to confide, to reflect, to laugh, to cry, or to remember. And that’s what our Service chaplains help us to do.”

DUKE OF EDINBURGH THANKS The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward, this year’s Lord High Commissioner, thanked the people of Scotland and the chaplains of the Chapel Royal for their support following the death of his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II. He said: “The outpouring of emotions, the demonstrations of respect, love and grief was overwhelming, and a privilege to experience and behold. “I think I can speak for my whole family when I say we will remain forever grateful for that support... “I was really touched and comforted by the manner in which the chaplains made us all feel behind closed doors and away from public scrutiny.”

KEY MOMENTS ● The Assembly closed with the Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Shaw Paterson, encouraging the Church to ‘keep moving forward’. He told the Assembly that it had been ‘a wonderful experience’ being Moderator, and told the Commissioners not to become despondent as they returned to their parishes. “Keep moving forward,” he said. “We don’t know where God’s spirit will lead us. But let’s step out in faith, following the example and commandment of our saviour Jesus Christ.” ● Invited to speak on the final morning of the Assembly, the Archbishop of Canterbury celebrated the growing friendship between the Churches of Scotland and England. The Most Rev Justin Welby said that the two national churches ‘must be the mortar that holds together the diverse stones that so beautifully make up the United Kingdom’. ● During the discussion on the interim Joint Report of the Theological Forum and FAPLT on Assisted Dying, the Assembly heard moving testimony from Susan Pym, who saw her sister die from a rare neurological condition. Mrs Pym said that her sister had asked three times for help to end her life, but that she couldn’t do it. “In her final hours I considered what I might do (to ease her suffering)... I couldn’t do it. The final words I barely heard her whisper were ‘please help me’ but I couldn’t do it.” “If you have walked in my

shoes I know you will support my plea for the Church to (support assisted dying). If you haven’t walked in my shoes I pray you never will.” ● Rae Lind, national convener of the Church of Scotland Guild, revealed that over £425,000 has been raised for the Guild’s partner projects over the past three years, despite losing a year to Covid-19 disruption. Mrs Lind said: “This is a remarkable achievement for Guild members, bringing a lifeline and hope to many people and following in the tradition of 137 years of service at home and abroad.” ● The Assembly was played a video produced by the steering group of the Young Adults Guild, which has been rebranded Love in Fellowship and Trust (LIFT), but is still working in partnership with the Guild. ● The General Trustees accepted motions instructing them to give urgent consideration to artworks and to pipe organs in churches scheduled for closure, and to work with congregations where redundant buildings may be bought by local communities. ● During the report of the Safeguarding Committee, the Assembly passed a motion from the Rev Lynn Brady inviting the committee to ‘consider its processes as relate to people who have been found not guilty in criminal proceedings but who are subject to Safeguarding procedures’. ● The Assembly passed a new ‘support for survivors of historic abuse’ policy. Safeguarding convener Adam Dillon said: “This marks the culmination of many years of work in drawing together a policy for survivors of non recent abuse, and with the General Assembly’s approval, our commitment to ensure that survivors’ voices are heard, and that we can start to become a trauma informed organisation so that no one will ever be met with indifference or silence, again.” Words by Thomas Baldwin Pictures by Andrew O’Brien for the Church of Scotland

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024 SUPPLEMENT Life and Work, Church of Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN. Scottish charity number SC011353 4 By purchasing Life and Work you can keep up-to-date with all the latest news on the Church in Scotland and throughout the world, as well as helping to support the Church’s work. From just £2.99 for an electronic copy or £9 for a three-month print subscription at www.lifeandwork.org/ subscribe or speak to your church’s Life and Work promoter. Gift subscriptions are available. New elders and communicants are eligible for three free issues. www.lifeandwork.org facebook.com/lifeandwork Twitter: @cofslifeandwork Instagram: @cofslifeandwork Above: Karen McKay, the Depute Assembly Officer, made history when she became the first woman in the history of the Assembly to lead the Moderator into the Hall. Right: A presentation was made to John Williams, who has worked on the Assembly’s audio visual systems for 50 years.

What is a moderator?

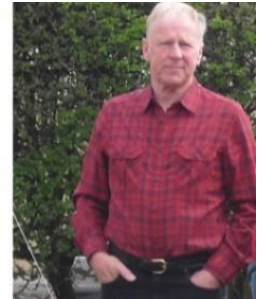
The moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is the minister or elder chosen to moderate (chair) the annual [General Assembly of the Church of Scotland](#), which is held for a week in Edinburgh every year. After chairing the Assembly, the Moderator then spends the following year representing the Church of Scotland at civic events, and visiting congregations and projects in Scotland and beyond.

As the Church of Scotland is Scotland's national church, and a presbyterian church has no bishops, the Moderator is – arguably alongside the [Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland](#) – the most prominent figure in the life of Church of Scotland adherents.

From Stewart McNeil (Session Clerk)

Mission Planning: We are continuing to look at ways of fighting the Presbytery proposal that would see the eventual closure of our sanctuary utilising every avenue that is open to us.

Bill Jenkins: A few weeks ago, we lost our longest serving elder, Bill Jenkins after a long battle against the illness that had been with him for over ten years. You may recall that Bill's picture featured within our last magazine, receiving his 50 year long service award as an Elder. Sadly, this was the last day that Bill was able to attend morning worship.



Our former minister, the Rev. Caryl Kyle conducted Bill's funeral service fulfilling a promise she had made to Bill many years previously and it was nice to catch up with her again, just a pity about the circumstances.

I struggled to write something for the magazine because much was said during the eulogy and I didn't want to just repeat all of that, but a couple of things came to mind that I thought would be nice to share.

Several years ago, I became Bill and Betty's elder. I would always leave this visit until last because of their hospitality and because they always enjoyed a blether. Bill and I loved discussing our tastes in music and in early visits, I discovered Bill loved two main types, Country and Western!!!

Even up until a few weeks ago, these visits were never without laughter, which gives you an idea how Bill, and Betty learned to live and cope with his illness.

Some time ago, May and I started having the occasional holiday at Benderloch, just a few miles North of Oban. On the first occasion we attended the local Church, their session clerk approached us at the end of the service to say it was nice to see us there. When she asked where we came from, we just said 'not far from Glasgow', but she persisted so we told her she probably hadn't heard of it, but it was called Holytown. Her response floored us, because the next words that came from her lips were 'do you know Bill and Betty Jenkins'? An icebreaker if ever there was one! Unknown to May and I, Bill and Betty and all their family had holidayed there for years.

Just like the rest of you, I'll miss Bill and I pray for Betty and all the family as they go through the healing process wrapped in God's love.

I hope the family won't mind, but I was going through some Spring Fayre pictures and found this one. It says it all about his sense of fun, enthusiasm for getting into the spirit of things in love and support of his Church.



Spring Fayre 2010 – manse grounds

Cynthia Boyd: In the last few days, we have lost another long serving member of our congregation in Cynthia Boyd (82). Cynthia also helped out at Wrangholm with opening and closing the premises to accommodate midweek classes. Much of the work Cynthia did was unseen by most and never at anytime did she seek acknowledgement for the contributions she made. Cynthia was generous and regularly gave of her time and resources to help our church here in Holytown in any way she was able. She loved the social nights in the hall and helped in the preparation like decorating the hall if there was a tartan theme and providing little things like tartan napkins to help make the occasion more authentic. She rarely missed morning worship and when evening services were held, she was at most of these as well. Cynthia assisted for many years with our Sunday School and was a regular attender at the Guild & Thursday Club. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this sad time.



When someone you love dies (with acknowledgement to social media)

When someone you love dies, it's just impossible to ignore the sadness and hurt you will feel inside. It's devastating. A part of you dies too. Time will make things easier but that sadness and hurt will always be there because they gave you so many good things to remember in your life, you miss them, and you really loved them.

Those we love never truly leave us. There are things that death cannot touch. What we have once enjoyed we can never lose; all that we deeply love becomes a part of us. Remember that people are only guests in your story in the same way you are only a guest in theirs so make the chapters worth reading.

To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die. When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. We understand death only after it has placed its hands on someone we love. The sorrow we feel when we lose a loved one is the price to pay to have had them in our lives.

Psalm 73:26 "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

John 16:22 "So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."

Revelation 21:4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death^[a] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'

Sunday Readers 2024

We warmly invite all members of the congregation to contribute to the service by volunteering to read from the scripture during the service. Should you wish to do so, please contact our Locum Bill Hastings or one of the Elders. Plenty of notice is always given for you to prepare in advance for the reading that is chosen.



Prayer for the General Election

On behalf of the churches that we serve, we encourage Christians in Scotland to engage actively, constructively, and charitably in the democratic process of the General Election called for on Thursday 4 July 2024.

We recall, from the history of Scotland, the moment when King James VI was reminded that there are "two kingdoms": a temporal kingdom in which he was King and a spiritual kingdom in which Christ is King. We as Christians in Scotland belong to "two kingdoms" and as such are called to participate in the shared life of the society in which we live, to seek the common good and promote a social order in which all can live together in peace.

As those who seek to follow Christ, we are called to see the image and likeness of God in each person, especially when we disagree deeply on matters which affect our common life. In an age where there is the temptation to amplify sensationalism, stimulate knee-jerk reactions, and create echo chambers, it may be that our most important contribution to public life is to model "good disagreement" in which respect and love are evident.

In closing, whilst recognising that the timing of the election and the new requirements on Voter ID may pose particular challenges, we urge all to exercise the privilege of casting a vote and, beyond the election, to pray that God will give wisdom, courage and vision to those who will assume the responsibility of government on behalf of the whole country.

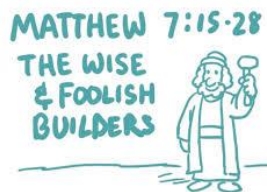
Lord our God, you are the maker of heaven and earth
And in your image we are shaped
That we might care for creation
And for all that you have made.
May a deepening concern for the world we share
Shape our vision for the future that is to come.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Your presence is revealed through Christ
In the midst of all the places where people dwell,
And so we pray for the welfare of the city
And for all who dwell in the cities and towns of our nation.
May their concerns be heard and understood
That our towns and cities might flourish and prosper in these days.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
You promise renewal by your Spirit
To all whose hearts are open to receive,

And so we pray for the renewal of our rural communities
And for the islands of our nation.
May the voice of the islanders be heard
And the contribution of the land to our well-being be embraced.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Lord our God, you see the people of our nation
And understand the heart of their concerns.
Grant to all who stand for office
A desire to understand and to share those concerns.
May our Parliament shape our nation for the good of all
And may we see our society renewed, through Christ and by your Spirit.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.



Everyone who hears the word of God is building a house. The one who hears God's word but does not do what it says is like a foolish builder who builds his house on sand. That house will be crushed in a storm. The one who hears the word of God and obeys it is like a wise man that builds his house on solid rock. That house will stand up to any storm. Wise people build their faith on the foundation of God's word. This faith stands strong against the storms of life.

A poster with a white background. At the top, the title 'The wise man built his house upon the Rock' is written in red. Below it, the text 'The wise man built his house upon the rock, x3' is written in black, followed by 'And the rains came tumbling down.' and 'The rains came down and the floods came up, x3' and 'And the house upon the rock stood firm.' To the right of this text is an illustration of a man in a white shirt and black pants standing on a rocky outcrop, looking up at a large, multi-story stone house built on the rock. Below this, the text 'The foolish man built his house upon the sand, x3' is written in black, followed by 'And the rains came tumbling down.' and 'The rains came down and the floods came up, x3' and 'And the house upon the sand fell down.' To the left of this text is an illustration of a man in a white shirt and black pants standing on a sandy beach, looking up at a small, simple house built on the sand. At the bottom of the poster, the text 'So build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ, x3' is written in black, followed by 'And the blessings will come down.' and 'The blessings come down as your prayers go up, x3' and 'So build your life on the Lord.' To the right of this text is an illustration of a glowing yellow lightbulb. At the very bottom, there are three small lines of text: '© Holytown Parish Church 2018', 'From Christian Missionary', and 'www.holytownparish.com'.



To All: A Big Thank you to all who have done something for their Church over the past quarter no matter how large or small. You know who you are!

Flower List 2024:- Thank you to all who have added their name to the flower list for 2024. If for any reason you are unable to fulfil your commitment, do please let Christine Bell know by calling 01698 – 732337.



The following communication was received, unfortunately too late for our Feb 24 edition.



To whom it may concern

We at Love and light who represent our whole community and Organisation wish to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making so many kids faces smile at Christmas. If it wasn't from kind souls in such great organisations like yourselves then many children would fall short of being happy at such an important time.

We hope we can continue to bond with your fellows for the greater love of the poorer souls of the community. Take care and may you have a fantastic New Year. We have enclosed a few pictures for you.

Blessings
Jane Chalmers





Presentation of Badges – Wednesday 1st May 2024

Last night marked our last company night of the 23/24 session 🐝

The girls enjoyed breaking into their Gracie Bee pinata that they have been working on throughout the year and enjoyed finding the goodies inside 🍬🍬🍬

We then heard a bit about the work the girls have been doing throughout the year with the Explorers learning about animals 🐱🐶🐘

The Juniors learning about space 🚀🌌

The Brigaders learning about Christian musicals 🎵 and leading on the physical aspect of the badge with group games 🏀 amongst many other things.

We then presented the girls with their badges 🏆🏆

We would like to extend our thanks to all parents and carers for bringing each girl along every week, they are a lovely group of girls and they have been a credit to your family.

A big thank you to all our officers who work hard to ensure the girls enjoy their time at Girl's Brigade 🐝

Our summer outing took place on Sunday 12th May at M&D's bowling 🎳.

We hope everyone has a lo1vely Summer. ☀️☀️



'Our Kirk Matters'



Holytown Parish Church



Warmest congratulations!

All at 1st Holytown Girls' Brigade would like to congratulate our officer Emma Burnett and her husband Stuart on the birth of their baby girl, Gracie who was born on Friday 1st March. She could not wait and came to meet them 7 weeks early. After a long 6 weeks in NICU and Special Care it was time to bring her home. The good news is that Gracie is now off her oxygen for 12 hours a day and is doing well.



Motherwell & Wishaw Division Girls Brigade

On 13th May the Division held their AGM to celebrate the girls and leaders achievements from session 2023-2024

🎉 Congratulations to all 🎉

Leader Service Awards 🎉

5 years' service:

Stephanie Parry - 1st Burnhead

Amy McGhee - 1st Holytown

Julia McKendrick - 1st Holytown

10 years' service:

Lynsey Brownlie - 1st Shotts

Emma Burnett - 1st Holytown

Jacqueline McKendrick - 1st Holytown

Isobel McNally - 1st Holytown

Kirsty Shaw - 1st Holytown



'Our Kirk Matters'

Holytown Parish Church

Leanne Robert - 5th Motherwell
Margaret Fullerton - 1st Burnhead

15 years' of service:

Alexandra Milton McGhee -1st Holytown

20 years' service:

Andrea Thomson - 1st Burnhead
Elaine Faulkner - 5th Motherwell
Elizabeth Campbell - 5th Motherwell
Janie Shaw - 1st Holytown

30 years' of service:

Alexis Findlay - 3rd Motherwell
Lesley McNaughton - 1st Cambusnethan
Claire Downes - 5th Motherwell
Joan Somers - 5th Motherwell

35 years' of service:

Amanda Mitchell - 1st Cambusnethan
Sharon MacVicar - 5th Motherwell

40 years' service:

Shona Dyer - 1st Burnhead
Nancy Frew - 5th Motherwell

Company Service Awards 🎉

70 years of membership of the Girls' Brigade in
Scotland - 5th Motherwell

90 years membership of the Girls' Brigade in
Scotland - 1st Shotts & 1st Bellshill

Thank You to Alexis Findlay who has accepted
Queens Award Coordinator and Steven Owen
who has accepted Divisional Chaplain.

The Officers of 1st Holytown Girls' Brigade

The aim of the Girls' Brigade, being a Christian organisation, international and interdenominational, shall be: To help girls to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through self-control, reverence and a sense of responsibility, to find true enrichment of life.





1st Holytown Boys' Brigade

The Boys will be starting back in early September. Further details to follow. They meet on a Monday night in the hall from 6.30 pm. Pictures below of our end of session fun night at the Ten-Pin Bowling.



Glen Baillie, Company Captain of 1st Holytown Boys' Brigade

The Church of Scotland Guild is a movement within the Church of Scotland which invites and encourages both women and men to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and enables them to express their faith in worship, prayer and action.

With around 15,000 members, the Guild is one of Scotland's largest voluntary organisations.



THE GUILD 2024

The Guild is starting back on **Monday 7th October at 1 o'clock** in the Church hall and we welcome anyone to come along and enjoy the fellowship and speakers. It may be a bit early for the announcement but please put it in your diary.

This year we are excited to welcome on board Irene Gilchrist as our new Secretary and we look forward to a packed syllabus.

If you can spare a couple of hours on a Monday afternoon please come along, bring a friend and give it a try. I am sure you will enjoy the fellowship.

We look forward to seeing you in October.

Christine Duns
President

Financial Statement as at 31/03/24

General Account

Balance held in Bank Account as at 29/03/24	£ 4852.61
Income for 2024	£ 12957.74
Expenditure for 2024	£ 14591.62

Fabric Account

Balance held in Bank Account as at 27/03/24	£ 900.11
Income for 2024	£ 103.65
Expenditure for 2024	£ 1260.00

Consolidated Fabric Fund

Balance held by General Trustees on our behalf as at 31/12/23	£ 1646.90
Already refunded to us for Fabric repairs and Insurance costs	£ 6347.40
A claim for all repairs and insurance costs from the end of November onwards will be raised for a value of £2584.67.	

Investors Trust Accounts

Balances held as at 30/11/23	
General Purposes Fund	£13736.00
Reserve Fund	£ 2460.39
Boys Brigade	£ 1144.23
Legacy Fund	£ 877.88
Sunday School	£ 462.00

Comments

The Accounts for the Church and Organisations for 2023 have been submitted to Presbytery for approval and to Edinburgh. On receipt of approval the accounts will be submitted to OSCR , the Scottish Charities regulator.

A Donation day will be held on Sunday 5th May 2024. Your support in these fundraising efforts are appreciated.

Susan Reid, Treasurer



A quarterly newsletter is produced in advance of the Communion Service and will be distributed by an Elder. Ideally, we wish to reduce our printing costs, so if you have an e-mail address and wish to be added to the distribution, do please let us know.

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