



Message from Rev. Peter Donald, our Interim Moderator.

Dear friends,

There was a time when the people of God wandered in the wilderness. It was a journey of hope and yet always, and again and again, marked by testing. Some good decisions were made, and some bad. And in the midst of it Moses ascended Mount Sinai and was given the Commandments. Anchored in the commitment of God to His people, the people were to know how to worship and therefore how to live.

Then there was the time when Jesus also found himself in the wilderness. Led on by the Spirit, we are told, and yet tested. Needing to anchor himself in the Scriptures long since handed down, and at the same time needing to allow those ancient truths to become his. Help from God was never far away, but he was to take hold of it. And from that we hear of Jesus like Moses on a mountainside, there sitting down and teaching those who would learn from him how to worship, how to live.

He began so famously insisting that faith invites us to receive blessing. Blessing, i.e. the favour of God, truly is poured out. But, Jesus says, see how blessings come and will come very especially to those who most need them. The poor in spirit, something there has broken their confidence and their peace. Those who mourn, they are so conscious of what and whom they miss. The meek, they have much experience of being trampled over in the rush. Those who long for a better world, moved to tears by the cruelty and the violence and the greed so prevalent – they, all these, are blessed and will be blessed. Or to put it another way, God holds them in His heart and is more than ready to answer their cries.

A young man in prison wanted to speak to me two days ago. And he wanted to speak to me about prayer, how for him prayer had come alive in a way that he had never begun to expect. He had been brought up in a Christian family but he was not even well in touch with that family (though I rather suspect they have been praying for him). But God had never been far away. It only needed that young man to lift up his eyes.

So, Jesus continued, recognise how blessings spread from being merciful, from not rushing to judge others. Recognise how blessings spread from being pure in heart, focusing on the things of God and not being so distracted and taken up with the mundane. Recognise how blessings follow those who are peacemakers, and desist from being the cause of stirring up trouble; healing hurts demands all our commitment ! And recognise how though truth may have a hard time in this world, and gentleness, and generosity – a hard time because so many prefer to be underhand, manipulative and selfish – it is still better to suffer for holding to what is good than to give up.

Jesus was a teacher and he also led the way. He took on our human longing and tears; he embodied the mercy and purity and peace making and righteousness of our holy God. We sinners, he wanted us to follow. Make a difference with the way you live. To be salt of the earth, or to shine God's light into every situation, this is our high calling. Thanks be to God.

PETER

Editor's note

The feedback I received following the first edition of KirkLink last month was very helpful, and the words of encouragement to continue in the same vein was very rewarding to me personally. I thank all those people who have taken the time and trouble over the last couple of months to let me know that they support this form of communicating news to everyone, whether they are members of the Wardlaw Church, other denominations, or of no church background at all.

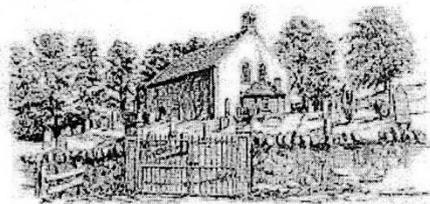
I am fully aware that nobody can produce a publication that will please all the readers, but hopefully KirkLink will have something of significance for the majority to read and enjoy. I shall endeavour to carry on including a wide cross section of articles in an effort to have something each month that readers will find interesting, and perhaps sometimes a little thoughtful and reflective. If there is something published that you think oversteps the mark, please let me know immediately and hopefully I will avoid that error in the future. If you believe something published in an edition is not accurate, for whatsoever reason, please send me a correction and I will print it in the next edition. Also, please feedback any constructive ways the publication can be improved to, perhaps, widen the readership.

Thank you for all the contributors to this edition. I am very pleased to receive articles and visuals - serious, informative, or humorous - for inclusion in future editions from old and new sources.

I am most grateful to Margaret Birkbeck and Mary McClelland for proof reading, and giving me constructive feedback on this edition.

Iain J. Mortimer

Tomnacross Tidings



Kiltarlity Church of Scotland

741 618) who, I am sure, will be most grateful for any contributions received, and will consider your submission for inclusion in Tomnacross Tidings.

The newsletter can be read on the Church web-site – www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk
click on the News tab, then the Newsletter tab.

Answer to prayer - A small boy badly wanted a baby brother, so his Dad suggested he pray every night for one. The boy prayed earnestly, night after night, but his prayers seemingly weren't answered. So after a few weeks, he didn't bother to ask anymore.

Some months later, his Dad said they were going to see Mum in the hospital and he was going to get a big surprise. When they got to the room, the little boy saw his mother holding two babies. The little boy stood still for a moment, and then cautiously observed: "It's a good thing I stopped praying when I did."

Civil Partnerships Overture

The January 2015 edition of KirkLink featured an article about an Overture concerning Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships which the General Assembly had asked the presbyteries of the Church to consider. The article was derived from material published on the Church of Scotland website, but in some respects was worded in such a way as to be misleading. The article referred to “gay Ministers” when in fact the issue under discussion related to those in Civil Partnerships, and not to those who have a homosexual orientation. It is important that we recognise the difference.

We need to be clear that the Church is welcoming, open and understanding towards homosexual persons, i.e. those who experience same sex attraction and are referred to as “gay.” As such there is no limit to their participation in the life, ministry and leadership of the Church according to the gifts God has given them.

However all persons in positions of leadership in the Church are expected to adopt a lifestyle that is based on the teaching of the Bible, which for members of the Church is to be held as the highest authority for faith and life. This affects all areas of our lives, including the expression of our sexuality, and the Church’s traditional understanding of the teaching of the Bible is that the standard set for the most intimate of human relationships is heterosexual monogamy.

For this reason persons involved in active homosexual relationships would not be considered to be living an appropriate lifestyle for someone in Church leadership. Hence the debate about those who are in Civil Partnership, and whether congregations may ‘depart’ from the doctrine and practice of the Church in relation to human sexuality and appoint such a person to be a Minister. But we must be clear in any discussion of this matter that the Church should unconditionally accept and love the homosexual person as a child of God, whom He deeply loves.

For Church members who regard the adoption of the Overture as a serious departure from the teaching of the Bible there may be a deep concern about the whole future direction of the Church, and they may wish to register their dissent. The formation of the Covenant Fellowship mentioned in last month’s article provides the opportunity for those who have this concern to express their view, and for those who wish to do so more information can be found at the following website address: -

<https://ftscotland.wordpress.com/covenant-fellowship-statement/>

The Editor thanks Alasdair Morrison for this clarification on the misleading headline to the Overture feature that appeared in last month’s edition.

trypraying.



This March 2015 trypraying organisation has an amazing opportunity to put trypraying message on buses not only in Edinburgh, but across Scotland!!! 2014 was the 4th year buses in Edinburgh carried the logo. We've heard many stories over the years.

Stories of people who saw the words and started praying right away, others who went to the website and ordered the free prayer booklet so they could go deeper. There were the few who sensed God encouraging them to come closer - or to come back to him. And then there was the young atheist for whom it was the final nudge into faith - just because he saw the words try praying.

What if the same were to happen all over Scotland ?Next year the UK ? The space is reserved on the buses. We have just a few weeks to raise the full amount. The cost is around £400 per bus for a month, when taking a national package. The logo would be shown on buses in the following places: Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, Stirling, Falkirk, Fife, **Inverness** and Galashiels.

This would be a significant event for the whole church in Scotland. It puts the simple invitation to pray into the public space for everyone to see. There will be a link to the website and the free smartphone app, which help take users on a journey to knowing Jesus.

Any amount can be donated, though why not invite your church to sponsor a bus for a month (£400) ? If we do not receive the full amount required for the advertising, we'll happily return your gift to you, provided you give contact details at the time of donation.

To donate you can email us to make a pledge: office@trypraying.co.uk or call us: 0131 202 6449

Information meetings. The buses will tie-in with many churches participating in 'Use it and Lose it' - giving trypraying booklets to congregations to pass on to friends or family members.

The following places are holding interest meetings in the next weeks. You are invited to come and consider if this is for your church. Each meeting will involve telling the story of trypraying over the last 4 years, hearing some of the great stories that have come back and consideration of how this could work in your area. Please let us know if you intend to come to one of these stating which one. Thanks.

Edinburgh. Saturday, 17th January 10:00 am. Liberton Kirk Halls, 28-30 Kirkgate, Edinburgh EH16 6RY.

Aberdeen. Monday, 2nd February 10:30 am. Gilcomston Church Union Street, Aberdeen AB10 1TP.

Dundee. Tuesday, 3rd February 2:00pm Coldside Parish Church of Scotland, Main Street, Dundee, DD3 7HN

**Inverness. Thursday, 5th February 2:30pm New Drumossie Hotel,
Old Perth Road, Inverness IV2 5BE.**

Glasgow. Thursday, 12th February 2:30pm, Partick South Parish Church, 259 Dumbarton Road, Glasgow, G11 6AB.

Galashiels. Thursday, 19th February, 7:30 pm Galashiels Baptist Church, Victoria Street, Galashiels, TD1 1HH.

Chirnside. Tuesday, 24th February 7:30 pm Southview Evangelical Church, Cross Hill, Chirnside, TD11 3UF.

You may wish to forward this to others you think would be interested. In addition it may still be possible to arrange a meeting for people in your area. The point of it all is this: trypraying is an unashamed offer for those who are not religious and don't do church to experience the outrageous grace of God!

Hoping you can join us.

David Hill for the team

www.trypraying.org



The above photographs show our organist, Tonya Clement playing at the Inverness Town House last Christmas Eve. Tonya is shown playing solo on the left, and the photo on the right shows her playing alongside concert violinist Litsa Tunnah.

Tonya says “It was one of the best ways of spending Christmas Eve ! It was a big event where the Russian and UK veterans of the Article Convoy met up together. The veterans from Russia toured around several cities of the UK, with the stop in Inverness on Christmas Eve. It was amazing to meet those remarkable, heroic people and learn more about the history of Arctic convoys during WW2 - as it all remained top secret for quite some time. I performed some classical and Scottish music on the beautiful Bosendorfer grand piano for the veterans, the delegation of officials and the Provost of Inverness, Councillor Alex Graham.

There will be a similar grand piano for me to play when I go down to London at the end of January - really looking forward to it ! I will miss the church though - after this I will try not to go anywhere for a while. Well, maybe only to New York in the summer to find out what grand pianos they have there for me !”



Free Church minister named one of UK's most influential Christians

The next Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland has been named amongst the UK's 100 most influential Christians in an online poll. Rev David Robertson, who takes up the role in May, was recognised for "highlighting the flaws in secular lobbying groups" and "bold public speaking" on various issues in the media. The Dundee-based Minister was also commended for his online blog, and it is thought his profile has increased through media appearances, his own books and speaking engagements around the UK at churches and universities.

Gordon Bell, communications officer for the Free Church of Scotland, said the recognition of the Free Church Moderator Designate was well deserved. He said: "Rev David Robertson has consistently been the voice of Christianity in an increasingly secularised Scotland and this nomination is just recognition of his gifts. David has a rare ability to apply an articulate Christian worldview to current affairs and it's no surprise his online blog is read by tens of thousands of people. To see his name ranked alongside household names like the Archbishop of Canterbury and Her Majesty the Queen shows just how much of an impact David has had on different issues over the past couple of years.

We have every confidence that he will make the most of his year as Free Church Moderator, and it is an honour for David to be the only Scottish Presbyterian minister on this list."

The winner was Canon Andrew White, more commonly known as the Bishop of Baghdad, for his bravery in leading a congregation amidst the horrors of the Islamic State regime in Iraq. The other 99 nominations were classified as "joint 2nd." The only other Scottish clergy to make the list were Archbishop Philip Tartaglia and the Episcopal Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Gregor Duncan.

The rankings were compiled by the Archbishop Cranmer blog, one of the most popular Christian websites in the UK which focuses on the interface of religion and politics. Members of the public were asked for nominations earlier in 2014, before the list was announced at the beginning of 2015. Organisers said it was to draw attention to just how much Christians are doing in the UK and beyond for the good of others.

WALKING on the GRASS

The room was full of pregnant women with their husbands. The instructor said, "Ladies, remember that exercise is good for you. Walking is especially beneficial. It strengthens the pelvic muscles and will make delivery that much easier. Just pace yourself, make plenty of stops and try to stay on a soft surface like grass or a path."

"Gentlemen, remember -- you're in this together. It wouldn't hurt you to go walking with her. In fact, that shared experience would be good for you both."

The room suddenly became very quiet as the men absorbed this information. After a few moments a man, name unknown, at the back of the room, slowly raised his hand.

"Yes ?" said the Instructor.

"I was just wondering if it would be all right if she carries a golf bag while we walk ?"

Brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it ? This kind of sensitivity just can't be taught.

Thanks to Phil Tipper on the Isle of Mull for this comment.

Visit - A parishioner called the Minister during a power-cut caused by a blizzard and said she urgently needed a pastoral home visit. "I'm sorry, but I can't get out because of the heavy snow," the Minister explained. Unsatisfied, she barked, "But I can't watch TV ! So what else am I supposed to do ?"

Details of Church of Scotland vote on the Civil Partnership Overture revealed



Details of the vote in favour of the ordination of Ministers in a civil partnership by Church of Scotland presbyteries have been revealed by the Kirk in January. It announced in December that a majority had now voted in favour of change.

The Kirk has now said 32 of the 45 presbyteries backed proposals to allow them to appoint a minister who is in a civil partnership. A final decision on the issue will be taken at General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh in May.

A total of 1,391 presbytery members voted in favour and 1,153 against, resulting in a 54.6% to 45.4% split. Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Stirling presbyteries all backed the proposals, while Falkirk, Kirkcaldy and Inverness were among those that voted against. In West Lothian, 28 voted in favour of the overture and 29 against, while all 19 individual members of the Lewis Presbytery voted against the proposal. Jerusalem made no vote submission.

The ordaining of ministers in same-sex relationships has divided the Church since traditionalist members attempted to block the appointment of Rev Scott Rennie, who is gay, in Aberdeen in 2009. The General Assembly voted in support of Mr Rennie but introduced an interim ban on ordaining other gay ministers until a special commission had studied the matter. The ban was lifted in 2011 when commissioners agreed to consider the subject again. A number of church members have left over the issue.

Presbyteries that supported civil partnership ordination For / against

Edinburgh 115/59	Dunkeld & Meigle 24/10
Lothian 52/26	Perth 51/38
Melrose & Peebles 39/16	Dundee 45/16
Duns 24/11	Angus 40/29
Annandale & Eskdale 23/7	Aberdeen 45/29
Dumfries & Kirkcudbright 28/23	Kincardine & Deeside 28/13
Ayr 51/37	Gordon 24/21
Ardrossan 33/19	Moray 29/26
Lanark 22/11	Abernethy 13/8
Greenock/Paisley 52/28	Sutherland 15/11
Glasgow 127/93	Caithness 13/12
Dumbarton 34/30	Lochcarron-Skye 12/2
Argyll 43/20	Orkney 15/11
Stirling 50/38	Shetland 10/9
Dunfermline 26/24	England 23/6
St Andrews 35/20	Europe 28/10

Presbyteries that opposed civil partnership ordination For / against

West Lothian 28/29	Lochaber 6/18
Wigtown & Stranraer 10/19	Ross 5/38
Irvine & Kilmarnock 17/40	Uist 1/9
Hamilton 53/73	Lewis 0/19
Kirkcaldy 24/32	Jedburgh 10/22
Buchan 19/40	Falkirk 36/52
Inverness 13/49	

Improvements needed at Wardlaw Manse before Rev. Dr. Jonathan Humphrey can be inducted.

The Kirkhill and Kiltarlity Deacons' Courts have made an application to the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland and the Presbytery of Inverness to improve the Wardlaw Manse prior to the induction of Rev. Dr. Jonathan Humphrey. The results of these applications will hopefully be known at the next Presbytery of Inverness meeting at Trinity Church Hall in Inverness on Tuesday, 3rd February 2015. Rev. Peter Donald will also be seeking for an induction date of Friday, 27th March 2015 at Kiltarlity Church from the Presbytery of Inverness at this meeting.

Background The Manse is a one and a half storey detached 4 bedroom dwelling house built in 1975. The ground floor of the property presently has an entrance vestibule, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, boiler room, cloakroom / toilet, bedroom and study. The first floor level presently has three bedrooms, box room and a house bathroom with shower. Insurance valuation for Wardlaw Manse in November 2014 was £340.7k.

In 2010, 19 x white PVCu 'A' rated energy windows and sills and 2 x white PVCu door sets were installed. The outside dormer was renewed in 2010. In 2011 the property's roof was completely re-tiled. In 2012 the flat roof over the boiler house was replaced after the cracked chimney was removed, and a balanced flue was installed. The soffits are due to be painted in the spring of 2015.

The house bathroom and shower were installed in 1994 and the kitchen units installed in 1998 when Rev. Campbell McKinnon was the Minister. In 2002 the whole of the property's interior was decorated with new carpets prior to the induction of Rev. Fraser Turner. In 2009 the kitchen wooden floor was partially replaced following a small undetected leak from the dishwasher. A new vinyl covering was laid over the wooden floor. The kitchen and upstairs bathroom were painted in August 2010 prior to the induction of Rev. Kobus Smit. New vinyl was laid in the bathroom at this time.

The interior of the property looks dated, and is very much in need of improvement work to bring the property to an acceptable level for a new Minister and his family.

Improvement plan

Ground floor. Remove the stud wall, sliding door and frame between the kitchen and dining room to form one open plan kitchen and dining area. The kitchen equipment and services to be moved into the existing dining room. This makes better use of any straight walls for storage cupboards in this new area. The old kitchen was limited for walls to fix storage cupboards because of the shape of the kitchen. The old kitchen area becomes the dining room section in the proposed layout. Included in the new kitchen layout there is an induction hob and oven, fridge / freezer and dishwasher.

Cupboard in utility room is to be removed and a work top installed along the full length of the room. Washing machine (already plumbed in) and tumble drier to be placed underneath the work top.

In the sitting room, the fireplace and hearth are to be removed and replaced. A new wood burning stove is to be installed. Two anonymous donors have offered Jonathan and Kate Humphrey the full cost of supplying and fitting the stove and a new hearth, i.e. no cost to either Church.

In the downstairs cloakroom a new shower unit to be installed. This involves encroaching into the existing kitchen floor area.

First floor. A full new bathroom suite and shower unit to be installed in the house bathroom.

/Contd.

Floor coverings

Wood laminate to be laid in downstairs hall and sitting room. Vinyl covering for new kitchen / dining area, new downstairs cloakroom with shower, utility room, and house bathroom on first floor. New carpet for stairs, upper landing and all three bedrooms. Existing carpet in downstairs bedroom and study to be cleaned and retained. The carpet in box room (store) on first floor to be cleaned and retained.

Decoration

All wood chip paper on ceilings to be cleaned and painted.

All wallpaper to be removed from all rooms with the exception of study and box room on first floor. After the wallpaper has been removed, walls to be prepared and painted. Minor blemishes in study and box room wallpaper to be repaired and the wallpaper painted.

Vestibule, utility room and boiler room to be cleaned and painted.

All central heating radiators to be painted a colour to match room they are situated in.

Existing doors (including cupboards), frames, skirting boards and bannister will be rubbed down and a lighter stain applied in an effort to match the wood laminate floor. Bookcase and shelves in the study to be painted.

No painting of window frames and sills is needed because they are all PVCu material.

Action taken. Wardlaw Manse Committee comprises of Ethna Ferguson and Hamish MacLennan representing Kiltarlity Church and Avril Marr (co-opt for this project), Ian Dearing and Iain J. Mortimer representing Wardlaw Church, Kirkhill.

The Wardlaw Manse Committee have gathered 3 competitive quotes from contractors, local and national, to cover the plumbing, joinery, electrical, kitchen, decoration, and floor covering work.

The following local contractors have been appointed by both Deacons' Courts to carry out the work.

Kitchen, bathrooms and wood laminate flooring - plumbing, joinery, electrical – Billy Horne of Kirkhill.

Floor coverings, excluding wood laminates – Carpet Emporium of Inverness.

Decoration – Robert MacKintosh of Lentrane.

During the vacancy, Wardlaw Manse was let twice. The first rental started on 4th August 2012 and ceased on 15th November 2013. The next rental started on 25th June 2014 and ceased on 25th January 2015. A grand total of £13,561 in rental monies was raised by the two lets. A sum of £4,523 was paid out by the General Trustees following a request by both Church Treasurers, to cover the cost of removing the chimney over the boiler house, putting in a balanced flue, and a new flat roof over the boiler room. This leaves a balance of rental monies of £9,038 held at 121 towards any improvement costs.

The estimated total cost of the improvements is £27.5k. Allocating the £9k of rental money to part pay for the improvements, a balance of £18.5k was need from both Churches from present funds to fully fund the work. The Deacons' Courts of Wardlaw Church, Kirkhill and Kiltarlity Churches have met in the last few days and agreed, independently, to fully fund these improvements.

Of course, all these arrangements are subject to the General Trustees and the Presbytery of Inverness giving the go ahead on Tuesday, 3rd February 2015.

Amid the winds and the waves of life *by Gemma Curran.*

Lent is supposed to be a time for spiritual self-examination. But suppose our lives are so full of problems that we can scarcely take our eyes off them ?

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake... 'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.' 'Come,' he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me !' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt ?' Matthew 14 verses 25 to 31

If you could have any superpower, what would it be ? Unfortunately, this story isn't evidence that Jesus is in the habit of handing out superpowers. So, what can we learn from this account ? Like most of our modern superhero stories, this incident is less about the superpower on display and more about what the characters learn about themselves and others.

Most significantly of all, the first thing Peter sees is Jesus doing what God alone can do. In Scripture, power over the wind and waves is always attributed to God. Jesus' feat of walking on water is more than just a clever trick. It's further evidence of his authority – an authority which enables Peter himself to walk on water. Even more remarkably, we can trust that the power of Christ residing in us through his Spirit will enable us to walk through life's storms without fear.

The second thing Peter learns is that he can't do it himself. He began to walk towards Jesus, "but when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me !' " Peter was aware of the wind and the waves in his peripheral vision when he climbed out of the boat. But when he stopped focusing on Jesus and allowed his vision to be filled with the storm, he began to sink.

Few of us will ever find ourselves in a boat surrounded by a storm, but we regularly weather metaphorical storms. The storms around us might be powered by financial difficulty, impossible deadlines at work, family strife, unstable health, relationship breakdown. But when we find ourselves in a storm, what do we do ? Do we allow the wind and waves to fill our vision and overwhelm us, or do we keep focusing on Jesus ? Do we trust that, if we begin to sink, he will reach out and catch us ?

The one we look to is the Lord, who not only directs the winds and waves but also death and life, the only one who can save us – and carry us through the storms of today.

Gemma Curran works with The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity.

All in the month of FEBRUARY. It was:-

100 years ago, on 1st February 1915 that Sir Stanley Matthews was born.

65 years ago, on 8th February 1950 that the first-ever payment by credit card took place when the Diners Club paid their restaurant bill at Major's Cabin Grill in New York.

50 years ago, on 22nd February 1965 that US President Lyndon B Johnson approved a request to send the first US combat troops into Vietnam.

30 years ago, on 16th February 1985 that the Islamic militant group and political party Hezbollah was founded in Lebanon.

Also 30 years ago, on 19th February 1985 that the first episode of the BBC TV soap opera EastEnders was broadcast in the UK.

25 years ago, on 11th February 1990 that Nelson Mandela was released from prison after 27 years. He became President of South Africa in 1994.

20 years ago, on 26th February 1995 that Barings Bank, the oldest merchant bank in London, collapsed after its chief trader in Singapore, Nick Leeson, lost £827 million on unauthorised transactions.

10 years ago, on 14th February 2005 that the popular video-sharing website YouTube was founded.

Inverness Music Festival – 21st February to 4th March 2015

Inverness Music Festival is a **competitive music festival** open to all ages and abilities. There has been a Music Festival in Inverness since 1922. It stopped during the war years and for a time in the sixties and early seventies but was started again by Mr Curtis Craig. Some of the trophies presented belonged to the Northern Counties Music Festival, the earliest having been first presented in 1922.



Inverness Music Festival provides opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to develop their potential in a wide range of musical, dance and speech events. All performers are adjudicated and given a written appraisal of their performance. As this is a Festival and not an exam it is not always the performer with the best voice, or musical ability that wins. It is the performer who has given the best performance who will win.

Appearing on the Roll of Honour, by winning the prestigious Curtis Craig Memorial Trophy, is Katherine Kemp of Kirkhill for playing the clarsach. The Crown Church Choir won two trophies last year, the Carnegie Challenge Quaich and the Leys Castle Trophy, and will be back this year to compete again.

Mary Robb and the SWRI choir are entered in 3 classes on the evening of 3rd March in the Empire Theatre. Tickets are £3 and can be purchased from the Eden Court Theatre.

The Festival competitions are held in the High School and the various venues available in the Eden Court Theatre complex. Further details can be obtained from the Festival Office, 11 Kenneth Street, Inverness, IV3 5NR Tel: 01463 716 616 or email: office@invernessmusicfestival.org

PLEA FOR VOLUNTEERS - Can you spare a few hours to help the festival organisers? You don't need any knowledge of music, you may well be able to hear the competitions that you help with for free and you will make new friends. Everyone is welcome, no matter what age. So why not give it a try? Contact the festival office, details above, for further information.

The Good Lord

Most seniors never get enough exercise. So in his wisdom God decreed that seniors would become forgetful and would have to search for their glasses, keys and other things misplaced and so do some walking. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God saw there was yet a further need. So God in his wisdom made seniors lose coordination that they would drop things which would require them to bend and reach and STRETCH. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God considered the functioning of senior bladders and decided that in His wisdom there might be calls of nature more frequently requiring more trips to the toilet and that would burn CALORIES. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Seniors were obliged to exercise more from these senior shortcomings and did become more active as a result. So if you find you are required to get up and down more as you AGE, remember it's God's will and in your best interests even though you mutter under your breath. Amen!

Thanks to Anne Lyle for this article

Which @ in heaven. Sir, The order of service at a wedding I attended last week contained a version of the Lord's Prayer which I had not seen before. It read: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from email." Amen to that. – Andrew Body, Ludlow, Shropshire.

Thanks to David Birkbeck for finding this letter in the 'Times' dated 9th January 2015

Scots at the start of two world wars

The latest additions to ScotlandsPeople online (www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) are the Scottish records of births in 1914, marriages in 1939 and deaths in 1964. You may wish to log on to search for any of your own family names.

The 1914 births reveal how patriotism gripped parents of babies after Britain declared war on 4th August. The final few months of 1914 witnessed a new fashion for naming boys Kitchener after Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War. Field Marshal Lord Kitchener's face adorned the famous recruiting posters after the outbreak of war. He was responsible for increasing the British Army from six regular and fourteen divisions to seventy divisions by the creation of the 'New Armies' named after him. Among the 123,394 births in 1914, there were 21 boys given the first or middle name of Kitchener, including John Kitchener Hay, born 13 December 1914. His mother Beatrice registered her son's birth, because her husband John was already in uniform as a lance sergeant in the Royal Army Medical Corps. A spirit dealer's assistant in civilian life, John Hay survived the First World War, resumed working as a barman and died in Dundee in 1926, aged 43.

565	John Kitchener Hay	1914. December thirteenth 4 th 30 th PM	M	John Hay Spirit Dealer Assistant Lance Sergeant Royal Army Medical Corps Beatrice Wilson Andra Hay M. Glasgow 1914 Dundee	Beatrice E. Hay Mother	1914. December 13 th At Dundee Jan Murray Registrar
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There was also three girls who were given Kitchener as a middle name; all were born in 1916, the year that Lord Kitchener perished when HMS Hampshire was sunk off Orkney. Between 1914 and 1918 a total of 73 Scottish children were named Kitchener, and 9 boys named Horatio Herbert, the Field Marshal's first names. No fewer than 43 boys were named Jellicoe during this period, after Admiral John Jellicoe, Commander of the Fleet and, from 1916, First Sea Lord.

In autumn 1939, when Britain declared war on Germany, there was surge in the number of marriages in Scotland, as young couples rushed to wed before the men were posted overseas. There were 7,541 more marriages than in 1938. The total of 46,257 marriages came very close to the peak of 46,754 that occurred in the record-breaking year of 1920. This made 1939 the year with the second-highest number of marriages recorded to date in Scotland.

One couple tying the knot were Alexander Thomson Arundel, aged 21, lance corporal in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, was based at Bhurtpore Barracks, Tidworth, Wiltshire, when he married Jane Fulton from Glasgow, a 19-year old who worked in a fruit shop. He seems to have survived the war.

When, Where, and How Married.	Name (in full of Father, with Christian name) Rank or Profession, and whether Bachelor, Spinster, Widower, Widow, or Divorced.	Age.	Usual Residence.	Name, Christian, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Mean of Christian Name of Witness. If an Ineligible Marriage, Title of Deacon, or of Sheriff's Warrant.	When and Where Registered and Signature of Registrar.
1939. on the Twenty-third day of September, at St. Francis Church Glasgow.	(Signature) Alexander Thomson Arundel, (Signature) Alexander Thomson Arundel Lance Corporal. 2 nd Batta King's Royal Rifle Corps, Bachelors	21	Bhurtpore Barracks, Tidworth, England.	Alexander Thomson Arundel, Marion Stokes (deceased) Martha Jane Arundel previously Hardy, Mrs. Powell.	(Signed) Janis Kitchener, St. Francis Church, Glasgow. Signed George Powell Arundel, 4 th Orchard St. Glasgow. witness. Mary Ann Fulton, 37 th Mathison St. Glasgow. witness.	1939, September 27 th At Glasgow
After Banns: according to the Forms of the Roman Catholic Church.	(Signature) Jane Fulton, Fruiters Assistant, (Signature)	19	39 th Mathison Street, Glasgow.	William Fulton, Shoemaker Susan Fulton, Mrs. Dougal.	(Signed) George Arundel, 4 th Orchard St. Glasgow. witness. Mary Ann Fulton, 37 th Mathison St. Glasgow. witness.	W. D. D. S. Registrar

Some well-known Scots born in 1914 include Gavin Maxwell (1914-1969), naturalist and author of Ring of Bright Water, who was born on 15th July 1914 at House of Elrig, Mochrum, Wigtownshire. Norman McLaren (1914-1987), documentary film-maker, was born William Norman McLaren, on 11th April 1914 at 21 Albert Place Stirling, the son of William McLaren, a master house painter. He went on to become an award winning film-maker who made films for the GPO film unit, the Solomon Guggenheim Foundation and the National Film Board of Canada. Not among the release of 1914 births is Tom Weir (1914-2006), the climber and broadcaster, whose birth on 29th December 1914 was not registered until January 1915.

In 1914 out of a total Scottish population of 4.75million there were 123,394 births, a slight increase on previous years. The current figures (2013) - out of the total Scottish population of 5.33 million there was 56,014 births, 54,700 deaths and 27,327 marriages.

Beaulay Care Project - Senior Citizen's Afternoon Teas in 2015

Kilmorack dates are Tuesdays and Kirkhill dates are a Thursday

2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – cost £1.50

Month	Kilmorack Hall Frances Grant 782 496	Kirkhill Community Centre Eileen Morrison 831 185
February	17 th	26 th
March	17 th	26 th
April	21 st	30 th
May	19 th	28 th
June	16 th	25 th
July	21 st	30 th
August	18 th	27 th
September	15 th	24 th
October	20 th	29 th
November	17 th	26 th

Christmas Special Afternoon Tea
with entertainment
Tuesday, 15th December 2015
at Kirkhill Community Centre – 2:30 p.m.

CHICKEN SURPRISE

A couple go for a meal at a Chinese restaurant, and order the 'Chicken Surprise.' The waiter brings the meal, served in a lidded cast iron pot.

Just as the wife is about to serve herself, the lid of the pot rises slightly and she briefly sees two beady little eyes looking around, before the lid slams back down. 'Good grief, did you see that?' she asks her husband. He hadn't, so she asks him to look in the pot.

He reaches for it and again the lid rises and he sees two little eyes, looking around before it slams down. Rather perturbed, he calls the waiter over, explains what is happening, and demands an explanation.

'Please sir,' says the waiter, 'what you order?' The husband replies, 'Chicken Surprise'

You're going to love this, and you're going to hate yourself for loving it !

'Ah! So sorry,' says the waiter, 'I bring you Peeking Duck by mistake.'

Sometimes I pretend to be normal, but I've mislaid my tablets

Love is "When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca - age 8

Love is "Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other." Karl - age 5

Church Guild project sustains Mediterranean refugees in Malta



The Church of Scotland Guild is supporting initiatives in Malta which are helping alleviate the suffering of refugees. Rev. Doug McRoberts spoke of this in our Church on 18th January 2015 when he led our worship service. Rev. Doug McRoberts was the Church of Scotland Minister at St. Andrew's Scots Church Valetta in Malta until recently.

3000 people drowned in the Mediterranean in 2014. Recently two drifting ships carrying hundreds of refugees off Italy made the news, but most people are unaware of this tragedy on Europe's doorstep.

The world is facing the worst refugee crisis since WW2 and Malta - situated only 207 miles north of Libya and an EU member - is on the front line. But this small and densely populated island has been struggling to cope. In January its foreign minister said his country could not afford to continue supporting migrants in its over-crowded and disease-infested detention camps.

The Church of Scotland Guild is supporting a project titled - 'Out of Africa into Malta' - set up by St Andrew's Scots Church Valetta on the island. Iain Whyte, Guild Secretary, said: "We have a long history of partnering Christian charities at home and abroad that are working with people on the margins - the poor, the vulnerable, the forgotten. The 'Out of Africa into Malta' project does all of these and the Guild is privileged to offer its prayerful support, to raise awareness of the issues and to raise much needed funds."

For over six years the congregation of St Andrew's Scots Church has been helping ease the suffering of hundreds of people, offering small but life-enhancing comforts to those in the camps. Cool boxes in summer to keep heat, dirt and rats at bay or snowsuits in winter to keep babies warm and dry, have been offered. Friendship and companionship is also available to people who are enduring unimaginable stress. In September, the church opened its modern International Centre in the heart of the capital Valetta, which acts as a base for operations. There is hope for these people.

Support from the Church of Scotland Guild's renowned fundraising power is helping these desperate people create a sustainable life in Europe. £90,000 has been given to Malta Microfinance, a scheme which aims to help family groups stand on their own feet again. It is making an impact. Peter Lloyd, chairman of Malta Microfinance, said: "It has helped move migrants out of the open centres into rented accommodation as a start to integrating into Maltese society. Courses are helping migrants move out of low paid menial jobs into work that pays better and is more satisfying; business loans help migrants permanently transform their lives. It's still early days but word of mouth is bringing more people forward to borrow money from us. We are indebted to everyone who has given so generously and in particular all the speakers who go out to tell our story to local guilds."

English language classes, which are growing in popularity, are available at the church,. The congregation also made a donation to a Migrant Offshore Aid Station which has saved thousands of lives at sea. The Royal Navy ceased operations in the area last October. Rev Shuna Dicks of Aberlour Church, twinned with St Andrew's, ran a petition against this damaging decision.

Malta is an island with a rich Christian legacy. St Paul the Apostle was shipwrecked there. Now you can help bring Christian values to life on this embattled island. Peter Lloyd said: "The fact is that many are fleeing for their lives. I genuinely fear how many will drown in 2015. Please pray for our work. Please pray that that more members of our congregation will become involved so that we can do even more. Please go along to the talks being given to the local guilds and if you wish to donate please give to us via the Guild project 'Out of Africa into Malta.'"

Third Sunday Praise at Wardlaw Church is on Sunday, 15th February 2015 starting at 6:00 p.m.

Third Sunday Praise is an informal gathering for a time of worship which is meaningful and heartfelt, using a mix of modern and traditional music.

People from a variety of church backgrounds really appreciate this opportunity to worship together and enjoy the tea, coffee and home baking provided afterwards.

Everyone who wishes to come is made most welcome.

This event gives everyone a chance to learn and sing new hymns and songs.

If you are able to play a musical instrument, and wish to share that skill, please speak to Alasdair Morrison – 831 185.

It was raining hard and a big puddle had formed in front of an Irish pub. An old man stood beside the puddle holding a stick with a string on the end and jiggled it up and down in the water. A curious gentleman asked what he was doing.

"Fishing," replied the old man.

"Poor old fool," thought the gentleman, so he invited the old man to have a drink in the pub. Feeling he should start some conversation while they were sipping their whisky, the gentleman asked: "And how many have you caught?"

"You're the eighth," replied the old man.



Home Schooling. *Most older folk were home schooled, as well as actually attending a school...*

Our mothers taught us TO APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE: "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning."

Our fathers taught us RELIGION: "You better pray that that will come out of the carpet."

Our mothers taught us LOGIC: "If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you're not going to the shops with me."

Our fathers taught us MORE LOGIC: "Because I said so, that's why."

Our mothers taught us about CONTORTIONISM: "Just you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!"

Our fathers taught us about the science of OSMOSIS: "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."

Our mothers taught us about BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION: "Stop acting like your father!"

Our fathers taught us about ANTICIPATION: "Just wait until we get home."

Our mothers taught us about ESP: "Put your sweater on; don't you think I know when you are cold?"

And finally, our fathers taught us about JUSTICE: "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you!"

Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our church... Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

14th February - Saint Valentine's Day

Saint Valentine's Day, many believe, was named after one or more Christian martyrs and was established by Pope Gelasius 1 in 496 AD. Valentine of Rome was martyred about 269, and this day usually 'belongs' to him.

The first recorded association of Valentine Day with romantic love (1382) is from Geoffrey Chaucer. He wrote, 'for this was Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird cometh there to choose his mate.' This poem was in honour of the first anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia. Valentine Day is referred to by Ophelia in Hamlet (1600 - 1601).

*To-morrow is St Valentine 's Day
All in the morning betime
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine.*

The modern mention of Valentine's Day can be found in a collection of English nursery rhymes (1784):

*The rose is red, the violet's blue
The honey's sweet, and so are you.
Thou are my love and I am thine
I drew thee to my Valentine.*

18th February is ASH WEDNESDAY – mourning our sins

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday ? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin. (See Genesis 18 verse 27; 2 Samuel 13 verse 19; Job 2 verse 8 and 30 verse 19; Isaiah 58 verse 5; Jeremiah 6 verse 26; Jonah 3 verse 6)

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2 verses 12 to 19). Ash Wednesday became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes.'

The collect for today goes back to the Prayer Book, and stresses the penitential character of the day. It encourages us with the reminder of the readiness of God to forgive us and to renew us. The Bible readings for today are often Joel 2 verses 1 and 2, verses 12 to 18, Matthew 6 verses 1 to 6 and 16 to 21 and Paul's moving catalogue of suffering, "as having nothing and yet possessing everything." (2 Corinthian 5 verse 20b to chapter 6 verse 10).

The actual custom of 'ashing' was abolished at the Reformation, though the old name for the day remained. Today, throughout the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional. Certainly the mark of ashes on the forehead reminds people of their mortality: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return..." (Genesis 3 verse 19). The late medieval custom was to burn the branches used on Palm Sunday in the previous year in order to create the ashes for today. The Collect for Ash Wednesday is:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Members of our Church family and others to be remembered in your prayers

Please continue to remember the following people in your daily prayers over the next month. The **Guthrie family, Alison** and **Allan MacKenzie, Willis** and **Pat Jones, Betty Macrae, Bunt Dunbar, Margaret West, Anne Lyle, Mary Urquhart, Madda Georgeson** and **Duncan Gray**.

Margaret West is back at home being nursed by Don after four weeks in Raigmore following her fall and breaking her right leg and arm. Mobility around the home is via a wheelchair as Margaret cannot bear weight on her leg for at least another three weeks, and crutches are not an option with a broken arm.

Madda Georgeson was admitted to Raigmore Hospital on Monday, 26th January with breathing difficulties and pneumonia. **Duncan Gray** had a minor stroke in the middle of the January and after a short stay returned home to be nursed by Anne. Duncan will return to hospital in the next few weeks to unblock a carotid artery in his neck.

Following months of not feeling well and suffering stomach pain, **Anne Lyle** had a major operation to remove a growth from her bowel on Wednesday, 21st January at Raigmore Hospital following a CT scan that morning. Anne has immediately bounced back, and greeted John on the Thursday by being sat in a chair by her bedside and going for a short walk with him up and down the corridor. Anne has shown a remarkable recovery and came home on the sixth day following the operation – texting and on the telephone as normal (for her). Anne is most grateful to all the consultants, doctors and nurses at Raigmore whose skills quickly diagnosed and treated the cause of her discomfort. Anne also wishes to thank everyone for all the messages – texts and cards – that you have sent her and John at this time.

Anagrams from Anne Lyle

PRESBYTERIAN : When you rearrange the letters: **BEST IN PRAYER**

ASTRONOMER: When you rearrange the letters: **MOON STARER**

DESPERATION: When you rearrange the letters: **A ROPE ENDS IT**

THE EYES: When you rearrange the letters: **THEY SEE**

GEORGE BUSH: When you rearrange the letters: **HE BUGS GORE**

THE MORSE CODE : When you rearrange the letters: **HERE COME DOTS**

DORMITORY: When you rearrange the letters: **DIRTY ROOM**

SLOT MACHINES: When you rearrange the letters: **CASH LOST IN ME**

ANIMOSITY: When you rearrange the letters: **IS NO AMITY**

ELECTION RESULTS: When you rearrange the letters: **LIES - LET'S RECOUNT**

SNOOZE ALARMS: When you rearrange the letters: **ALAS! NO MORE Z 'S**

A DECIMAL POINT: When you rearrange the letters: **I'M A DOT IN PLACE**

THE EARTHQUAKES: When you rearrange the letters: **THAT QUEER SHAKE**

ELEVEN PLUS TWO: When you rearrange the letters: **TWELVE PLUS ONE**

AND FOR THE GRAND FINALE:

MOTHER-IN-LAW: When you rearrange the letters: **WOMAN HITLER**

The meeting on Wednesday, 14th January 2015 was cancelled on the morning due to severe weather conditions. The presentation by a representative from the Street Pastors Inverness will hopefully be included in the new season's programme starting in October. Jeanette and Maris wish to apologise for the late cancellation of this event but the safety of members is always first priority.



The next meeting of Kirkhill Guild is on **Wednesday, 11th February 2015**, starting at 2:30 p.m.

There will be a presentation by a representative from the Samaritan organisation. Most people have heard of the Samaritans, but do you know what they offer? They are trained volunteers who give their time to those who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. This is an opportunity to learn more about the help and advice they give to others in need.

Everyone is most welcome to come along and enjoy a good talk, pleasant company with refreshments served at the end.

LIFE and WORK

Wardlaw Church congregation can order their copies from Moira McDonald, or contact her on 831 333 and pay a reduced rate of £20 for 12 copies, instead of £24.

All those who already have an order in place, please let Moira or Iain Mortimer have a cash or cheque for £20 to cover your 2015 subscription as soon as possible – thank you.

Thomas Kinkade (January 19th, 1958 – April 6th, 2012) was an American painter of popular realistic, bucolic, and idyllic subjects. He is notable for the mass marketing of his work as printed reproductions and other licensed products via The Thomas Kinkade Company. He characterised himself as "Thomas Kinkade, Painter of Light," a phrase he protected through trademark but one originally attributed to the English master J.M.W. Turner (1775 – 1851). It is estimated that 1 in every 20 American homes owns a copy of one of his paintings. This is a story he told shortly before he died.

'Out of the mouths of babes...

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my daughter, Aspen, spoke up from her relaxed position in her seat. "Dad, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant she had been pondering some fact for a while, and was now ready to expound all that her six-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked. "The rain," she began, "is like sin, and the windshield wipers are like God wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms I was able to respond. "That's really good, Aspen." Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little girl take this revelation? So I asked, "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?" Aspen didn't hesitate one moment with her answer: "We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us."

I will think of this revelation every time I turn on my windshield wipers. In order to see the rainbow, you must first endure some rain !'

Thanks to Mary Bell for this story

Why universities would never give God a PhD.

1. He has had only one major publication, and it wasn't even in English.
2. It had no references.
3. It wasn't published in a refereed journal.
4. Some even doubt he wrote it by himself.
5. It may be true that he created the world, but what has he done since then ?
6. The scientific community has had a hard time replicating his results.
7. He never applied to the ethics board for permission to use human subjects.
8. He rarely came to class, just told students to read the book.
9. Some say he even had his son stand in for him, and teach the class.
10. Although he set only 10 requirements, all of his students have failed the test.

DOES GOD EXIST ?

One day, a professor at a university, in challenging his students, asked the question: "Did God create everything that exists ?" A student, taking a chance, answered: "Yes, He did."

"Everything ?" asked the professor. "Yes. Everything" "Then God also created evil, because evil exists." replied the professor.

There was no answer. The professor, satisfied, continued: "Therefore, faith in God is only faith in a myth."

But another student put up his hand and asked: "May I ask a question, professor ?" "Yes," replied the professor. "Does cold exist ?" "Of course." answered the professor. "Did you never feel cold ?"

"Actually, sir, cold does not exist." the student responded. "Cold is the total and complete absence of heat. Cold is the term we created to explain the absence of heat. Without heat, objects are inert and do not exist."

"And, darkness?" continued the student, "Is there darkness ?" "Yes !" replied the professor.

"No." the student replied. "Darkness is the term we use to explain the total absence of light. You can study light and brightness, but not darkness. Technically, darkness does not exist."

"And evil, sir ? Does evil exist ?" No reply.

"God did not create evil. Evil is the absence of God in people's hearts ! It is the absence of love, virtue, and faith in goodness."

Now it was the professor's turn to remain silent.

The student's name was: Albert Einstein.

Thanks to Ian Dearing for this article

New minister for Stornoway High Church



Rt Rev John Chalmers with his wife Liz during a visit to Stornoway High last August

The Church of Scotland is delighted to announce the Rev Dr Wayne Pearce is to take up his charge as Minister of Stornoway High Church next month. The induction service at the High Church next month will be attended by the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Rev John Chalmers, who preached at the High Church during his visit to Lewis last summer.

The Moderator said: "My wife Liz and I could not have experienced any warmer a welcome than we

experienced in Stornoway. I am looking forward to sharing this special moment with the congregation which is another opportunity to affirm the good work being done by the Church of Scotland throughout the Islands."

The Moderator will be joined by the Moderator Designate, Rev Dr Angus Morrison, who returns to Stornoway where he was formerly minister of St Columba's (Old Parish) Church.

Session Clerk to the High Church, John Cunningham, said Dr Pearce's appointment comes after the congregation of Stornoway High Church has come through a challenging period. He said: "We had prolonged vacancy compounded by the departure of a significant proportion of the congregation over the Civil Partnerships and the Ministry issue. But all that is in the past now and we believe God is doing a new work in Stornoway High. We've seen a renewed sense of unity and purpose as undiscovered talents and gifts have emerged across the congregation. Everyone is pulling together as they sense God's calling on their lives and there is a huge sense of excitement around Dr Pearce's arrival."

Stornoway High Church has been without a minister since Rev Willie Black retired early in 2011. The induction of Dr Pearce to the charge of Stornoway High takes place on Friday, 6th February at 7pm with a social event to follow in Stornoway Town Hall. The induction service will be taken by Rev Tommy MacNeil, Moderator of Lewis Presbytery and Minister of Martin's Memorial Church, who will preach the sermon. Also participating in the service will be Rt Rev John Chalmers, Rev Ian M M Macdonald and Rev T K Shadakshari. On Sunday, 8th February Dr Pearce will be 'preached into' his new pulpit by Rev Dr Angus Morrison.

Dr Pearce is currently the APC Minister for Skye and Harris. He is married to Margaret and they have three children. His arrival at the High Church will restore Lewis to its complement of 7 full time ministers.

February 2nd - The Presentation of Christ in the Temple / Candlemas

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2nd February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself. In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance.' Mary and Joseph, like all good Jewish parents, went to the Temple with Jesus, their first male child - to 'present him to the Lord.' At the same time, Mary, as a new mother, was 'purified.' Thus we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So where does the Candlemas bit come in ? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story behind Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2 verses 22 to 40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.



NOTICEBOARD

- * We offer our appreciation to Rev. Stewart Frizzell for leading our first two Sunday worship services in 2015. We welcomed for the first time, on 18th January, Rev. Doug McRoberts – father of Rev. Scott McRoberts from Inverness St. Columba new charge. Doug recently retired as Minister of the St. Andrew’s Scots Church Valetta in Malta. Before Malta, he was a Minister in Keith, but has spent most of his working life in news and international communications, latterly as the communications director of British Energy plc. But older members might just remember his voice from BBC Radio Highland in the early 1980s. Rev. McRoberts who came along with his guitar and gave a very thoughtful sermon on Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus. Rev. Bruce Ritchie made a welcome return on the 25th January and gave us all food for thought on how Jesus dealt with ‘the man with leprosy’ as told in Luke 5. We thank Rev. Stewart Frizzell, Rev. McRoberts and Rev. Ritchie for coming along and leading our worship services in January.
- * We also offer our grateful thanks to Mary Robb who played the organ to allow Tonya to spend time with her family, who were on holiday from Russia, on the last Sunday in December, the first and last Sundays in January.
- * The first service in February (1st) is the annual joint service for the linked charges of Kirkhill and Kiltarlity. It will be held at Kiltarlity Church this year, and includes a communion service. The service will be taken by our Interim Moderator, Rev. Peter Donald. Other February services will be led by Mr. Len Cazaly (8th), Rev. Doug McRoberts (15th) and Rev. Bruce Ritchie (23rd and 1st March).
- * With our present heating arrangements on cold winter mornings the main sanctuary can feel rather chilly. The Deacons are presently investigating supplementary heating solutions, but a solution will come too late to help this winter. One place that is considerably warmer every week is the balcony area which you are most welcome to use during any cold spell. The other area which is warmer is the chair in the pulpit, but that place carries other responsibilities, so may not be a solution to any member of the congregation.
- * The Kirkhill Kirk Session meets on Tuesday, 10th February 2015 in the Guild Room at Wardlaw Church, starting at 7:30 p.m. The Kirkhill Deacons’ Court meets on Tuesday, 17th February 2015 in the Guild Room at Wardlaw Church, starting at 7:30 p.m. Both these meetings are open to any member of the congregations and anyone may attend these meetings, but only the Elders and Deacons have any decision-making powers.
- * Congratulations to Rev. Joe Barnard who has gained a licence to be a Free Church Minister and has been accepted for the position of Minister of the Kiltarlity Free Church. Joe’s induction date is most likely to be in the middle of March.
- * World Day of Prayer is an inter-denominational church organisation which enables us to hear the voices of women, from a different part of the world each year. On Friday, 6th March 2015 all over the world people will be coming together using the service produced by the ladies of the Bahamas with the theme Jesus said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to You ?’ Further details of local services will appear in the March 2015 issue of KirkLink.
- * It is likely to be the responsibility of Wardlaw Church to organise a social event following Rev. Dr. Jonathan Humphrey’s Friday evening induction. The date is still to be finalised, but hopefully will be 27th March 2015. This is an early request for ideas on the format of this evening event, and for volunteers to prepare and serve sandwiches, savouries and home baking. In the first instance, please talk to Maris Elkin or Iain J. Mortimer about your ideas and / or volunteering, ideally before the Kirkhill Kirk Session meeting on 10th February 2015 – thank you.



Interim Moderator – Rev. Peter Donald
230 537 / peter.donald7@btinternet.com

Session Clerk - Maris Elkin **831 590**

Safeguarding Coordinator – Mary Bell
831 717 / mgb41@btinternet.com

Kirkhill Sunday School – Margaret Birkbeck
831 518 / birkbeck2000@yahoo.com

KirkLink editor – Iain J. Mortimer **782 648** / **07833 188 939**
 iain.mortimer1@btinternet.com

Church web-site – www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk

WARDLAW CHURCH'S FEBRUARY 2015 EVENTS DIARY

SUNDAY	1 st	Joint Worship service at Kiltarlity Church at 11:15 a.m. – Rev. Peter Donald
SUNDAY	1 st	First Sunday Praise at Kiltarlity Free Church starting at 6:00 p.m.
TUESDAY	3 rd	Coffee / tea / home baking between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon.
WEDNESDAY	4 th	Prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m.
SUNDAY	8 th	Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m. – Mr. Len Cazaly
TUESDAY	10 th	Coffee / tea / home baking between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon.
TUESDAY	10 th	Kirkhill Kirk Session meets at 7:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY	11 th	Guild meeting at 2:30 p.m. – Samaritans
WEDNESDAY	11 th	Prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m.
SUNDAY	15 th	Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m. – Rev. Doug McRoberts
SUNDAY	15 th	Third Sunday Praise at 6:00 p.m.
TUESDAY	17 th	Coffee / tea / home baking between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon.
TUESDAY	17 th	Kirkhill Deacons' Court meets at 7:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY	18 th	Prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m.
SUNDAY	22 nd	Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m. – Rev. Bruce Ritchie
TUESDAY	24 th	Coffee / tea / home baking between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon.
WEDNESDAY	25 th	Prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m.

WARDLAW CHURCH'S MARCH 2015 EVENTS

SUNDAY	1 st	Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m. – Rev. Bruce Ritchie
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Advert in newspaper: Home computer, as new. Never been figured out.

Families are often like fudge - mostly sweet, with a few nuts.

The March 2015 edition will be available on 1st March 2015