

Bennochty Parish Church of Scotland

# Newsletter

March 2022



We hope all our readers are well and enjoying the longer days and the first signs of Spring. Our church services are more normal now as restrictions are eased, and organisations are also returning. However, substantial changes are in the air for the Church of Scotland and for our local churches in particular. See inside for more on this from the minister.

Minister: 643518

Session Clerk: 200179

Church Office: 201723

Website: [www.bennochtyparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.bennochtyparishchurch.org.uk)

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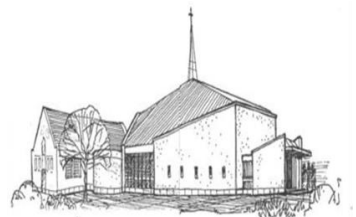
## ***'From the 'Manse',***

We are moving into a decisive period of what is known as the Presbytery Mission Plan. This is where every Presbytery has to decide on a new plan for the next five years. The plan is based on three things - the number of ministries the church can afford, how churches will come together, and finally, and probably the most challenging, how many buildings does the church need to keep. The draft plan is to come to Fife Presbytery at its June meeting. I think it is true to say that there is still a lot of work to be done between now and June.

Up to this point, there has been cluster group meetings of churches from across the Presbytery, including a Kirkcaldy cluster group, and then later on, a Kirkcaldy town centre group. From these discussions, some initial proposals will come to Kirk Sessions.

Kirk Sessions will then discuss these and submit their response to Presbytery by the middle of March. These responses will feed into the presbytery group, tasked with drawing up the new mission plan. It is important to say at this point that it is the presbytery that will ultimately decide, but it wants Kirk Sessions to be able to *influence* their thinking. We are asking people to be patient, as we work through this process, but once the Kirk Session has had the chance to look at any initial proposals, the congregation will be informed.

What makes this process different from before is its emphasis on Mission. In other words, it is not just about numbers or money, but what is the best structure for the church of today and the



future, in seeking to present the Good News of Jesus Christ. Think of it like a jigsaw. How do we create a team ministry, in a wider, viable congregation, with buildings in the right place and fit for purpose? As in any jigsaw, all pieces are required to complete the picture.

It is not going to be easy. There will be about 25% less ordained ministers, and some buildings will need to close. But this change is not just about today. It is actually about tomorrow, and the future viability of the church. One consequence means we will have to ask more of church members and those associated with the church.

It means we will have to prioritise, and some of the things the church has done for generations will need to stop. It also means the church will need new leadership, for a new age. I believe that is one of the keys to unlocking the potential of the church.

To use an image from the epic tale of the Exodus - are we captive to our traditions of the past, and so fail to move at all? Do we journey in the midst of a desert place, following the promise of God? Desert places are uncomfortable, and there are often more questions than there are answers. I suspect, it is a place we don't want to be.

Faith has ever been so. God's people have been here before. I read this recently, *hope is believing despite the evidence and then changing the evidence*. That is where we are at the moment, facing an uncertain, unknown, but hopeful future. As best I can, I will of course keep you up to date with what is happening and any decisions made.

But for the moment. Please stay connected. Stay safe. Till the next time.

**Robin**

**Communion** - Our next communion service at Bennochty will be on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March



**Presbytery of Fife**

SCO050563

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**Presbytery Clerk: Rev Dr David Coulter**

**Mission Director: Mr Neil Campbell**

**Moderator: Rev Jane Barron**

**Letter to all Ministers and Congregations in Fife Presbytery**

**Fife Presbytery Mission Plan Update – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

In the King James Version of the Bible, Proverbs 29:18 says: *"Where there is no vision, the people perish...."* In the RSV it is translated: *"Where there is no prophecy..."* while in the NIV it reads: *"Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint."* By the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 we as a Presbytery are mandated to deliver an approved Presbytery Mission Plan that will reduce our number of ministries by approx. 25% and determine the future of our buildings. To do so, we all need to seek God's guidance and to pray for revelation, prophecy and vision.

For several months we have been in consultation and now, given the time constraints, we need to begin to forge a vision for the future. There is an ancient proverb that says: *"Blessed is he who plants trees under whose shade he will never sit."* It is understandable that some ministers, ministry staff and congregations are apprehensive about the future and what will happen to their church and ministry. Many have continued to work hard to maintain the church for generations to come. Our people are devoted, committed, hardworking and faithful but now we are asking too much from too few. As a new Presbytery we have come together but we don't really know one another and what we can become. We have yet to discover that we can be greater than the sum of our parts. In some places congregations are dwindling; ageing and fearful about where the Kirk is going.

Elsewhere there are new shoots beginning to appear and new ways of being and doing church beginning to emerge and evolve. Many of our ministers are weary and Kirk Sessions are working hard to support them, sustain the faithful, our buildings and our Presbyterian heritage. We all want the Church of Scotland to be living and active in our community and to endure; despite the fact that our resources are being stretched and our infrastructure may no longer be as fit for purpose as it once was. Deep

down we know we need to change, to make decisions and plan to future proof our church, so that future generations will sit in the shade of the tree that we have had the courage and the conviction to plant.

Our people are valued and we need to retain the faithful. We as a Presbytery have come together to support one another, to help one another as followers of Jesus and to be a force for good and a catalyst for change across our communities. We need to deliver on our promise to unburden ministers, elders and congregations and to free them up for mission, vitality and growth. We need to be prayerful and open to God speaking as we listen to him and seek his will as we continue to evolve, change and deliver the plan. Our aim is to enable ministers and congregations to fulfil their calling and to realise mission that is sustainable.


Lastly, in thanking you for all that you have done and continue to do for our church, we would ask you to pray for us, as together we seek to discern God's will for Fife Presbytery's Mission Plan.

With all good wishes and every blessing,

Jane, Neil and David

Rev Jane Barron – Moderator;      Mr Neil Campbell – Mission Director  
Rev Dr David Coulter - Clerk

### **Easter and Holy Week Services**

Monday, 11 <sup>th</sup> April	Bennochy, 7 pm	
Tuesday, 12 <sup>th</sup> April	St Bryce Kirk, 7pm	
Wednesday, 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Abbotshall, 7pm	
Maundy Thursday, 14 <sup>th</sup> April	Linktown, 7pm	
Good Friday, 15 <sup>th</sup> April	Kirkcaldy congregational, 7pm	
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> April, 11am	Easter Sunday service with communion	

**Lent Study Course** - This year's Lent study course begins on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and will run weekly for 5 weeks. The course will be on Zoom from 7 - 8.30pm each evening. Look out for further details and Zoom link

## **Zambia**

The Church of Scotland at present has 3 Mission Partners in Zambia: Keith & Ida Waddell continue in the fields of education, and for those with special needs, also Gina Oliver as Health Secretary. The Church of Scotland also has 3 Mission partners in Malawi.

Jenny Featherstone served long and well as Mission Partner, funded both by the Church of Scotland and the Methodist Union. Her first Newsletter, September 2007, came from Kitwe in the north, where, in the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, she taught Social Work and related subjects, assisting women's leadership programmes, and young people on the training farm programme with life skills and business skills.

Her first Newsletter from Choma in the south, July 2013, as Head of Chodart Training centre. Courses offered were

IT six month course @£183

Tailoring one year course @ £250

Carpentry one year course@ £300 all with a view to future employment.

Further news was of a one year contract - June 2019-2020 for community work involving Counselling, Liason among the Deacons and denominations, Alcohol abuse, Play4All, Credit Union.

She now oversees these projects independently. Such a role is the touchstone for many in need as we have recently experienced with the family of Grace and surely will continue to do so.

There is no longer the post of Mission Partner correspondent, so I step down as such. Hopefully a new team will take on responsibility for on-going fund-raising and support in future and we, as a congregation, will continue to play our part in World Mission.

*Margaret Simpson*

## **Louisa Turner, Development Worker**

All around us we see that Spring is in the air, as many snowdrops have appeared despite the wind and rain, white against the dark soil. The snowdrops are being interspersed with an array of colour from crocus' – a rainbow on the ground, amongst the buds of other rays of yellow from the narcissi and daffodils unfurling. God's promise of hope is all around us.

That hope, is something which we have looked forward to, the desire of something good is going to happen post pandemic. As Spring follows the dark dreich days of winter, and colour bursts through the gardens, giving us joy within, following the spring in our step and in our own demeanour, gives us the impetus to celebrate with others.

A celebration which women of the Parish are invited to is International Women's Day Bite and Blether which is being hosted by members of the Fife Interfaith Group and Fife Women's Tent. Women of the Parish are invited to a free afternoon tea and blether, to celebrate 'International Women's Day Bite and Blether', on Tuesday 8th March 2022 from 1pm – 2.30pm at Bennoch Parish Church.

This year's theme is #BreakTheBias. The afternoon will consist of some words from Cllr Judy Hamilton followed by an interactive workshop on Biblical remedies which women would have used, using oils and spices available at that time. An afternoon tea will be served whilst small groups blether over various topics. Don't be shy come along for a blether and celebrate the empowerment of women.

For catering purposes, every attendee must be registered. To register please contact Louisa Turner, Development Worker: telephone 07856940177 or email [developmentworker@bennochparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:developmentworker@bennochparishchurch.org.uk).

This event is being sponsored by Fife Interfaith Group, Fife Centre for Equalities, National Lottery Community Fund and Fife Equalities Forum.

Another celebration on the horizon is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June. Here at Bennoch Parish Church there are ideas afoot to mark the occasion. Ideas include a traditional afternoon tea, musical entertainment, barbeque, and tree planting. The date which Bennoch Parish Church has chosen is, Thursday 2nd June 2022. This falls within the public holiday which will see a nation celebrating 70 years of the Queen Elizabeth II's reign.

A planning meeting to explore ideas, will take place on Thursday 24th March 2022 at 11am at the Olive Branch Café, Bennoch Parish Church. If you would like to be part of the planning group or volunteer your services on the day, or simply suggest something to mark the occasion, please speak with Louisa Turner, Development Worker: telephone 07856940177 or email [developmentworker@bennochparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:developmentworker@bennochparishchurch.org.uk).

### **Platinum Jubilee**

On Wednesday 6th February 1952, at 11 am, our neighbour arrived at our door and she and my mother burst into tears. I was almost five and I cried too, because my mother was crying.

She of course was crying because the King, George 6th had died and for her he was the King who had won the War. We had a new Queen, Elizabeth.

This year we are celebrating the platinum jubilee of the Queen and in our June newsletter we would like to hear your memories of those 70 years: the Coronation celebrations? Do you have any Coronation souvenirs? Have you ever met or seen the Queen?

We would love to have your stories and any photos too. Speak to me any Sunday or get in touch. Thank you!

*Nancy Gilmartin*

### **Deaths**

21.11.21	Mrs Lena Stirling
02.12.21	Mrs Katrina Scott
09.12.21	Miss Ena Barrie
03.02.22	William Paterson
07.02.22	George McIntyre







## The Olive Branch Café

Open every Thursday in the Methven Hall from 1100 am – 2.00 pm for teas, coffees & home baking. Lunches served from 12 noon



free Wi-Fi

### Open Door Appeal

As you will be aware, the Open-Door team was set up a number of years ago to engage more fully with the local community. With the help and support of church and community volunteers we have developed a number of successful projects, including the Olive Branch Café, which, unfortunately, have had to be curtailed during the pandemic.

However, as the situation gradually eases, we are looking for some volunteers, possibly with new ideas, to join us in helping revitalize the projects, particularly our community café. We are keen to find members of the Session and wider congregation who may have the skills and/or are interested in taking up a new challenge to benefit our own church and the wider community.

There's lots of untapped talent out there - can you think of anyone in your District who might be approached to learn more of what we do?

If you are able to assist or have someone in mind who may be interested, can you contact Alison Hamilton on 01592 260834.

- \* Recently there was a farewell presentation to our long standing volunteer café manager, Phil Reeves, to thank him for his exceptional service over a number of years. Although he is stepping down, the work of the café continues and Phil has assured us he will still be supporting the Olive Branch.

[www.bennochyparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.bennochyparishchurch.org.uk)



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- Just start your online shopping first at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and join up using your name and email address.
- Enter 'Bennochty Church' as your cause, then shop as you normally would. There are over 4000 retailers to choose from.
- The retailer will reward your shop by donating a percentage of your spend to Bennochty Church. Even small donations mount up when there are lots of supporters.

Every 3 months, provided £25 has been raised, **easyfundraising** will send a cheque to Bennochty Church with our rewards. If we don't reach £25, our donations will be carried forward to the next quarter. Think of the difference you can make to our church funds with absolutely no effort required. Simple. Safe. Free. Money for nothing.

PS Look up **easyfundraising** list of causes to see the rewards that come to other Kirkcaldy churches via this method!

### Popular retailers

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