



Tidings



Christmas

2015

Dear friends

It is a privilege and a pleasure to finally be able to write to you. While for many of you I am a new face, you have been on my mind for quite some time.

My journey started in university. My Honours dissertation was based on the life of a man baptised in the Old Parish in the 19th century. I was aware of the ministerial vacancy from the start and my focus intensified upon visiting the church during Open Doors Day 2014, when I had just started my Probationary period in St. John's. At the time I thought "there is absolutely no way this charge will still be vacant when I'm available to apply"!

I was acutely aware of members of the congregation engaged in joint events in the town, such as St. John's Friendly Hour. I was thrilled when I was invited to preach at the joint communion service in March. As the day drew near when I might be able to apply, I could barely dare to believe that the opportunity would not be snatched away. I applied at the start of August and it would be nearly two months of interviews and preaching before the Nominating Committee would be satisfied that I was the man for the congregation. A further two months would pass before, with your agreement, I would be inducted. And so we begin a new chapter in the life of the Old Kirk, together.

When we think of new chapters, new starts and new things we perhaps think of the New Year, or the season of spring. Our minds turn to lengthening nights, ewes' expectant with lamb, greenery and buds. Yet, in the moment of newness there are so many unanswered questions about how the immediate future will look and how the environment might change. All we know are the dark nights, pregnant with possibility, teasing us with potential.

It is fitting, then, that I begin my ministry and preaching at the start of advent. We reflect on another scene over two thousand years ago, another dark night, pregnant with the Lamb of God, teasing the world with potential. What would he bring to his hearers and his hearers' hearers? Generation after generation would pass as the Gospel of Christ took root throughout the world and eventually reached the town of Hamilton. Moving on, generations would worship together as the collegiate congregation. Ministers would come and go, passing the baton, which is the privilege of serving the congregation and telling the story of Christ, from one to another. Together, this story and this Christian life would be shared in the parish, bursting with potential in every generation. However, what of this generation?

What is the future for this congregation, this parish, this town, this generation? How will the congregation and the individuals within it develop in the near future, far future, and eternal future? We are currently in the dark, pregnant with possibility, teased with great potential.

There is a past, a present, a future, and this is a congregation that links all three. I have studied the past, I stand in the present carrying the baton with you, and I look forward with excitement at this developing chapter as together we share the ministry of God in Hamilton.

Every rich blessing, now and always,

Your Minister and friend

Ross



What's On

December

Sunday 6		Second Sunday in Advent
	10.45am	Holy Communion & Christmas Lunch
	6.30pm	Joint Communion Service in Cadzow Parish Church
Friday 11	7.30pm	Carols by Candlelight (in Church – teas/coffees and goodies afterwards in Halls)
Sunday 13		Third Sunday in Advent
	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 20		Fourth Sunday in Advent
	10.45am	Family Service & Christmas Pie Sunday
Thursday 24	11.15pm	Watchnight Service
Friday 25	10.45am	Christmas Family Service
Sunday 27	10.45am	Family Service

January 2016

Sunday 3	10.45am	Family Service
Sunday 10	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 17	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 24	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 31	10.45am	Morning Worship

February

Sunday 7	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 14	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 21	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 28	10.45am	Morning Worship



Prayer

Lord, as we journey with you, you support us in every time of life. As we journey together, we are reminded that we are never alone, for you have put us together on this road of life.

When dark nights surround us and the cold deepens, it is so easy for us to forget that you are there. Yet, you are constantly at our side and you remind us of this with glimpses of your presence. Even the darkness is as light to you, and that light flashes forth as your eye is benevolently upon us.

We remember the good times of the past, and do well to thank you for them. The friends and family that have shared our journey are never far from our thoughts. We look forward to the future, beyond the darkness of now, and the taste of spring and new relationships is suddenly on our lips.

But between the past and the future is an ever-present now. The time and space that we inhabit, is a time and space that you have always inhabited and always will. You are here with us now. You have promised to never leave us nor forsake us. Now and for eternity our place is at your side.

Give us eyes to see the way you move in and around our lives; give us a heart to thank you for it; and give us the grace to worship you as individuals and together, as a people who are never alone in this life or the one to come.

Thanks be to you, our God, in Christ our saviour.

Amen



Dear Friends of the Old Kirk

It is so good that now we have Ross as our Minister who will, I am absolutely sure, with his family, be warmly be welcomed into the fellowship of this Church.

I have to say that the last 18 Months or so, have been a great experience for me.

I am aware that I knew many of you before coming to take up the post of Interim Moderator and Locum, but I have got to know you even better and I have found a tremendous fellowship here.

The Union has been a great blessing to both Churches and now you have the second Minister in that union and I am sure he is raring to go!

I have found a great parallel to my final Charge, Uddingston; Old, while I have been with you. The absolute beauty of the building; the type of worship; the amazing music; all have made me feel very much at home and, given the Church first and foremost is the people, you have inspired me, not just in attendances, but in the sheer attention and devotion which is palpable each and every Sunday.

I also have been privileged as Locum, to have been brought close to a goodly number of people through the pastoral care of the congregation and that is a great privilege we have as Ministers and regularly, it is so obvious that pastoral care is a two way street, because I have learned from not a few and have shared so personally with so many and for that, I always will be thankful.

There is a great spirit and there is a great enthusiasm in Hamilton; Old and I am absolutely certain that that will not be diluted in any way; indeed, I am sure it will be enhanced in Ross's Ministry.

So to all; to the Nominating Committee, so strongly led and encouraged by Alistair; the Office Bearers led so ably by Louis and Bill who, as Clerks, have been so hugely cooperative and supportive; to the Leaders of the Organisations; to the Property Committee, particularly, John, David and Jim, for the enormous task they had and carried out so efficiently and professionally in the refurbishment of the Sanctuary ; to Helen for the seamless contact between Pulpit and Organ and to Andrea, who is encyclopaedic in her knowledge and really is a PA to the Minister in her unfailing, professional support and utter trustworthiness.

Let's not forget Forbes, our Caretaker, for her attention to the hugely important "back stage" tasks of the Kirk and who endlessly supplies Minister and others with floods of coffee!

There are so many more, such as would take the whole of "Tidings" to mention and to all, I am so grateful.

I wish you all every good thing in faith for the future and no doubt, if your new Minister allows for it, I may just pop up again!

With Every Blessing

Norman



CHURCH MOUSE

The Church Mouse has reappeared after a long absence and this time would like to complain about the cold draught that blows through the Church doors when people are entering the Church. I feel that a heavy winter curtain would be an idea to be hung on a rail at each door which could be drawn back and forwards as each person enters the doors during the autumn and winter seasons. My feet were frozen before the Service and I had to find a really cosy corner to hide myself in and I'm not telling anyone where it is. The Church has been refurbished since I last wrote to the Tidings, with a new sound system, renewed electrics and painted it is looking very nice for our new Minister's arrival, I wonder if he will be able to find me. Till next time.

Church Mouse

A Few Personal Words of Thanks

Norman, by the time this issue of Tidings hits the streets the daily challenges, trials and tribulations of ministering to the folks of The Old Parish as our Interim Moderator and Locum Minister should be starting to fade from your memory. Therefore I thought it might now be appropriate to say a few personal words of thanks to you as you begin your well-earned rest.

To say you were Press ganged by Bill Wilson and me into becoming our Interim Moderator would not be a distortion of the truth. Nevertheless you approached your duties with commendable energy, enthusiasm and commitment. If that wasn't enough you also agreed to be our Locum Minister throughout the term of our vacancy, no matter how long or short that was to be. On Sunday 11 October, after around 18 months, our vacancy came to a very satisfactory conclusion and The Old Parish is now on the verge of beginning a new chapter in its life and witness under the very capable stewardship of Ross Blackman.

Vacancy or Nominating Committees, as they are now known, can be notoriously difficult to moderate given that they are usually drawn from a wide cross section of our congregation and therefore comprise a whole host of different individuals and personalities ranging from the most helpful and acquiescent to the downright stubborn and inflexible. Only they and their Chairman, Alistair Buttery, an embodiment of all of those qualities, know where they individually stand within that range!!

I make these comments, as you've no doubt guessed, with my tongue stuck firmly in my cheek! There is in fact no doubt whatsoever that we are in our present happy position, not just because of all their hard work, but also because of your leadership, guidance, encouragement and wise counsel throughout your time as our Interim Moderator.

As Locum Minister your professionalism and personal commitment to our spiritual welfare and well-being were second to none. Your Services of Worship were consistently inspirational and your fastidious attention to visiting those in care, the elderly and housebound and those in hospital more often than not stretched your contracted 2 days or so and a Sunday into 7 days. I'm told that your hospital visits were so timeous that you were often at bedsides before the hospital doctor's first consultation with the patient.

As for me, it's been said that Session Clerks are a breed apart in many ways and relationships between them and their ministers can sometimes be a tad strained. However I can safely say that in my 15 years as a Session Clerk both here and in Larkhall, St Machan's I have never so consistently enjoyed working with anyone as much as I have with you. Time after time I've gone home from the church office with my sides sore from laughing and yet throughout your stewardship the business of our church was dealt with thoroughly, professionally and above all meticulously.

We now know that the date of your forthcoming surgery is to be the 8 December. So as you prepare for and undergo that short period of enforced retirement please do so confident in the knowledge that Alison and I and indeed everyone in The Old Parish will be holding you and Anne within our thoughts and prayers throughout. In the meantime we will all be looking forward very much indeed to continuing our friendship with you and having you both back to visit us in the not too distant future.

Norman you were and are a sheer joy and pleasure to know and to work with and I will miss but treasure your support and that very special relationship we had enormously. May God hold you and your family in the palm of his hand and bring you joy, peace and love now, over Christmas and in the coming years together.

Louis



thank
you!

DIDN'T THEY DO WELL!!?

As you sit there each Sunday and soak in the beauty and serenity of our Sanctuary, spare a few thoughts for all of those individuals who worked so hard over the summer months to restore and maintain its glory.

A huge thanks must be extended to John Downie, David Leishman, Jim McCartney and all of the members of the Property Committee for their dedication, commitment and their tremendous hard work throughout to ensure that the rewiring and redecoration was completed to a very high standard and on time.

In addition our sincere thanks should also go to the scaffolders, the painters and decorators, the electrical contractors and all of the other craftsmen/tradesmen who so willingly gave of their services, often at a reduced cost or no cost at all to maintain the beauty of our church and indeed our manse, which has just been refurbished for our new minister and his young family to move into in the very near future.

Louis Munn
Session Clerk



Property Committee

The Church refurbishment is now complete. The works carried out were electrical rewiring, new emergency lighting and replacement of light fittings; new carpet in the Sanctuary and upstairs front balcony; upgrading of Vestry, Choir Room and Elders Room; new wireless security alarm; replacement of entrance doors; internal and external decoration; numerous plaster repairs and replacement ceiling in one staircase.

As you will appreciate all this work could only be carried out with good contractors, and the generous support of others, and in this regard I would like to thank David Leishman and Jim McCartney for their continued commitment to the Church.

The Manse has been decorated and carpeted throughout and the en suite toilet has been refurbished in preparation for our new Minister and his family. I would like to thank Alex Stoddart for overseeing the security of the Manse whilst it was unoccupied and his daily visits during the refurbishment to ensure the work was going ahead as planned.

Over the last few weeks the Church Organ has not been working to its full capacity, as it is being overhauled, but this work is nearing completion and should be fully operational by the time you are reading this article.

John Downie
Property Convener

Fellowship Committee

Since our September report, things have been relatively quiet... until now. We have the Congregational Christmas Lunch on Sunday 6 December after the morning service. On the following Friday, 11th December, the annual Carols by Candlelight evening takes place in the Church. This is a most enjoyable light-hearted evening, (although Campbell Barr's jokes don't get any better) and will be followed by some goodies in the halls.

On Saturday 9 January 2016 we are trying yet another new venture. 53 brave folks are going to the King's Theatre in Glasgow to see the Pantomime Snow White. Oh no we're not, oh yes we are!!! That will take us through till we try "An Afternoon with Robert Burns" on Sunday 21 February in the North Hall following the morning service. This is in place of the traditional Burns' Supper as the numbers in 2013 seemed to indicate a dropping off in popularity of the evening. It is hoped that by having the lunch, it will encourage more people to attend. At present the rough plan will be to have 1 speaker, 1 poem being read, 1 singer and the rest of us joining in using song sheets, with our own Ian Bell acting as chairman yet again. We have to give it a try.

As always we would be happy to look at any suggestions for places to visit and/or different things to try, so if you have any ideas, please let any member of the committee know.

Iain McLean
Convener



Finance

Following Louis' article in the June magazine regarding the projected deficit for the year, a few people have increased their offerings, however this has been offset by a fall in other offerings. For the first eight months of this year the income from Weekly Freewill Offering envelopes, Standing Orders, annual offerings and the open plate has fallen over the same period last year. We are very grateful for two big donations which leaves the overall position almost on a par to last year. Which means the projected deficit has not reduced. We will be looking at a Stewardship campaign in some form in the New Year, however you do not have to wait for that to increase your giving, this can be done at any time. If you pay by standing order you can go into your bank and ask them to increase your standing order, do it online if you have that capability or speak to me and I can give you a form to complete.

We are continuing to look at ways to cut back expenditure too. As previously advised this will be the last full paper issue of Tidings. The magazine can now be found on the church's website www.hamiltonoldparishchurch.org however if you have no access to the internet then please let your elder or Andrea know so a paper copy can be issued to you. These will be mainly in black and white to cut down on printing costs. If you see something happening you think is wasting money or have any ideas on how to reduce our expenditure, then please speak to your elder or any member of the finance committee so we can review the position.

Marilyn Henderson
Finance Convener

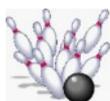
Company Section

The Company Section has had another busy start to the session with badgework and various competitions.



Battalion Cross Country

Euan Davidson represented the Company Section in the Battalion Cross Country at Stonehouse on 5th October. It was a long course and soon became clear the boys who were members of running clubs or just used to running away from the polis ! Despite not falling into either category, Euan did extremely well. In true Boys' Brigade spirit he ran his very best and showed great character – just like Alf Tupper – “The Tough of the Track”.



Company 10 Pin Bowling

Along with the Junior Section the Company Section had its annual 10 Pin Bowling Competition at Cosmic Bowl on 21st October. There was a great turnout and the competition was fierce. Within the Company Section the senior competition was won by Cameron Marks with Callum Hunter second, and the Junior competition was won by Euan Baird with David Chisholm in second place.



Battalion 10 Pin Bowling

Following on from our own competition the Company took part in the Battalion's 10 Pin Bowling Competition, also held at Cosmic Bowl. Sixteen teams and ninety six boys took part booking out the whole venue. The Company was represented by Callum Hunter, Jack Anderson and Euan Baird. All three boys played well but unfortunately didn't finish in the top three. It was great to see so many boys participating in a Battalion event.



Founder's Day Parade

The Company and our own Church hosted the Battalion Founder's Day Parade on 25 October to commemorate Sir William Alexander Smith, who was born in Thurso on 27 October 1854 and founded The Boys' Brigade on 4 October 1883. He was a man of great faith and vision, and the Brigade is the oldest - and still the best - uniformed youth organisation and worldwide movement advancing Christ's Kingdom among boys.

Thanks are due to the congregation for your co-operation with the Service, especially those of you who had to decant downstairs for the Battalion to occupy the gallery.

We are grateful especially to our Chaplain the Rev Norman McKee for his conduct of the Service, taking the time and trouble to research the history of Sir William Smith, and addressing his sermon to the boys themselves. The feedback from the Battalion has been extremely positive. It makes a huge difference at parades when the Minister tailors the Service to speak to the boys and hold their interest. Gold star for the Rev McKee!



World Mission

At the launch in May of our appeal for The Boys' Brigade and Church of Scotland World Mission project “**Speak Up: Speak Out,**” Graham Horne gave a very powerful presentation about bullying, and the extremely serious impact this can have on young people. The project was to raise funds for a widespread anti-bullying campaign in Trinidad and Tobago. In areas where drugs and violence are rife young people are frequently bullied and coerced into becoming members of gangs from which escape is almost impossible. The Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago run seventy two primary schools and five high schools, and the funds raised from the project will provide resources and support material to highlight the effects of bullying and help those who have been affected.

I am delighted to advise that the funds raised from our Bike Ride for the project came to £1397.20 which is a magnificent total. Thank you to everyone in the congregation and to the families of the boys for your donations and support. The funds raised will not only make a huge financial difference to the project but will also be a great encouragement to all those directly involved with delivering the material to the young people.

By raising this total we have retained again the World Mission's Company Section Trophy and the Highest National Average Trophy. What will always be foremost in supporting the projects is raising as much as possible to deliver help where it is needed most, but being presented with the trophies is recognition of the effort put in by the boys and staff, and the generosity of everyone who contributed to such a deserving cause. While the trophies may not be as good as calamine lotion hopefully they will soothe Graham Horne's memories of the bike ride and his ill-advised assault on a patch of stinging nettles.

The presentation of The Boys' Brigade World Mission cheque to the Moderator of the General Assembly, and the presentation by the Moderator of the trophies to the Companies raising the highest amounts, will be held at South Queensferry on 20 November.

Forthcoming Events

The next few weeks will continue to be extremely busy with the Company taking part in the National Table Tennis Competition, National Senior Five-a-Sides, the Battalion Badminton Competition and Battalion Drill, and several of the boys attending training courses as part of the work involved with their President's and Queen's Badges and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. More about that in due course.

Alistair Buttery
Captain



Gift Aid News

As you are all aware, there is concern about our financial position and we have been seeking to raise awareness of this through magazine articles over the year. Gift Aid is a tax efficient method of supplementing our income at no additional cost to members. In order to submit the claim to HMRC Revenue and Customs, I have to record individual donations by standing order and so, month by month, I can see the changing trend in our income. In the last nine months, seven members have responded to our appeal to review their Christian giving by increasing the amount they contribute. Many, many thanks to those concerned.

However, sometimes, either because we have lost a member through death or the person moving away, I have to take names off the register and at the start of this year we lost three monthly payments. You will realise that, in effect, these losses cancel out the increased giving. On a more positive note, over the course of the year, two new gift aid declarations were signed. If anyone would like to know more about gift aid, please speak to me or contact me by telephone or e-mail.

I am sure you will hear more about our financial position elsewhere in the magazine. I only have access to the standing order figures – records of annual payments and contributions through FWO envelopes will be passed to me early in January so I can complete the claim. I will be able to give you a more detailed report in the next magazine, with the proviso that the information refers only to gift aided donations. Meantime, I would ask everyone to give careful consideration to the appeals for support from your office bearers.

Finally, I would remind everyone to let me know if you stop paying tax at any point as your donations would no longer be eligible for gift aid.

Nesella Barr (Gift Aid Convener)
 01698 329177, nesella.barr@blueyonder.co.uk

giftaid it

Junior Section

The new session is fully underway after the Summer Break.

We are delighted to welcome Calum Ewart and Michael Lawson to the Junior Section. • All boys' from P4 -P7 will be made very welcome.

We recently took the boys Ten Pin Bowling to Cosmic Bowl at M & D's. •All boy's had a good time, and this is only the first of several outings we have planned for this session.

Not so well attended was our first competition of the year - the Cross Country. • Many thanks to Lewis Cousins and Colin Davidson for turning out to represent our company. • Grateful thanks also go to the parents for encouraging their attendance.

Many thanks to Lewis Chisholm, Colin Davidson, Calum Ewart, Greg McIntosh and Euan Parkes who all represented the Company in the Board Games competition. •They all did very well, and finished in 2nd place in our group.

Alan Brown
Leader in Charge



Anchor Boys and Bluebells

The session has been going well since September. We were delighted to welcome Emilia Black to the Bluebells and Stuart Davidson to the Anchor Boys, they have both settled in well and are taking part in all the activities.

Mr. Jim Naismith visited with the Harvest Boxes and the young people had great fun building them up. They were very happy when they received the reward of sweets as a "thank you".

A•Fire Brigade DVD about•fire safety in the home proved to be a great success with parents being questioned about smoke alarms etc when they arrived to take the children home.

The Hallowe'en party was fun with all the youngsters in their costumes ducking for apples, eating doughnuts which dangled from strings and playing a game of hunt the spiders.

We now look forward to a busy time as the Annual Carol Service will be held at Flemington, we host a film night with other companies being invited to attend and of course our Christmas party.

All boys and girls aged 5 to 8 years are invited to come along and join in all the fun.

Nanette McLean
Leader in Charge



Sunday Live

Preparing for Christmas is high on our agenda. We look forward to participating in the Family Christmas Service.

“Christmas Pie Sunday” will take place on Sunday 20 December following the Church Service. Everyone is invited to join us in the North Hall.

Our numbers have encouraged us to resume a Christmas Party for the children. This will be held in December when a visit from Father Christmas will be most welcome!!

Compliments of the Season to all our readers.

Sandy Messer
Convener

Crèche

A crèche is held in the Church Halls every Sunday from 10.30am until the end of the Church Service. If you would like to have a baby or a young child looked after during this time please come and see us in the room next to the Office.

Catherine Southgate

Brownies

We started back in September and welcomed 3 new brownies and have had a few busy weeks. We started a new interest badge - Out and About Badge which the girls seemed to enjoy. It covered how to read and follow a survey map, we went out and about in the community following a map around the town centre pointing out local amenities, post office, library, places of interest etc how to get about using public transport and learning about stranger danger/countryside codes etc.

We also had a great Halloween party this year and the costumes were really good as usual.

Our next event is our yearly trip to Motherwell concert hall on 1 December to see this year's pantomime which I am sure the girls will enjoy, meantime the girls will be busy doing a few Christmas crafts in the run up to Christmas.

If any girls aged between 7/10 years would like to come along they would be made very welcome.

Helen, Linda, Lynn

1970 Ladies' Club

The programme for the new year will be:

14 January	Tales of a Headmaster Brian Millar
28 January	Scots Night
11 February	Bothwell Community Festival Marjorie Robertson
25 February	Glasgow Parks Film Show
10 March	Coffee Evening Caley Male Voice Choir
24 March	AGM & Beetle Drive



New members are always welcome to join us and with a varied selection of speakers and topics it is a pleasant way to fill a couple of hours every second Thursday evening starting at 7.30pm.

Avril Cunningham
President

Old Kirk Dancers

Our class grows from strength to strength under the tuition of teacher Alison Robertson.

We recently attended a Ceilidh organised by the branch in aid of Lorraine Kelly's STV Children's Appeal which was a huge success. The Ceilidh band being REDD TERR (WERE FAB-U-LOUS).

Come along and join in the fun of Country Dancing. We meet every Tuesday evening at 7.45pm to 9.45pm in the North Hall.

For more information contact Irene Mathieson 427872. Many thanks

Irene Mathieson

Choir

Choir resumed their midweek meetings early in September, and have been working on new repertoire over the past weeks. October is generally a month when many people take a late break, before winter sets in, and we have missed several choristers, who have been enjoying late summer sunshine in foreign parts. However all are now returning to base and taking on board the new music we have in folders to take us through to January.

At the time of writing, November will prove to be a busy month through Remembrance, Norman McKee's final service with us, and the arrival of our new Minister, with an Induction and Social in the middle of the month. All quickly followed by the first Sunday in Advent at the end of November, and early December Communion.

It has been a privilege and delight to work with Norman during the vacancy, and he has been held in high regard by myself and the choir. His early planning of weekly worship allowed Introits and Anthems to be appropriate to services, and the choir have been appreciative of his ministry and work among us.

We now look forward to supporting Ross and his family as they start a new chapter of ministry for the Church, and will continue to support and encourage him using our talents to enhance worship.

The final midweek meeting of Choir will be Wednesday 16 December, when all music should be returned up to 13 December. We will restart in the New Year on Wednesday 13 January.

Helen C. Simpson

Organist

helensimps@sky.com

Guild

Be Bold Be Strong - Go in Peace



It seems no time since I wrote for Tidings in August - how quickly time passes.

Rev N McKee conducted an inspiring and encouraging address on the new theme at the dedication service.

Craig Garrett Jnr brought news of Casa Semear and all the work being carried out in Sao Paulo. We handed over a cheque for £150 for the continuing work of Casa Abba/Semear. Thank you to members of congregation who joined us and gave their support.

Guild meet on following dates:-

2015		
December	02	Christmas Lunch
	16	Music from Hamilton Grammar pupils
2016		
January	06	Jim Hughes - Scotland from Erskine Bridge to Loch Lomond
	20	Brian Millar - Tales of a Headmaster
February	03	Steven Owens - RSPB
	17	World Mission - Speaker on Mary Slessor
March	02	AGM & Projects update
	16	Entertainment by "A Touch of Class"
April	06	Syllabus planning 2016/17

NEWS!! GUILD PROJECT 2015-2016 - 6 PROJECTS RAISED £775076.90. SINCE PROJECTS WERE INTRODUCED IN 1969 THE GUILD HAS RAISED £6,014,158.

With every good wish for a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Avril Boothroyd

Coordinator

Saffronhall Singers

Our session is now well underway and I am delighted to report with the addition of five new members, there are now forty six names on our role. As you can imagine the session room is pretty full on a Monday evening. We are continuing to increase our repertoire, while at the same time, maintaining existing pieces. Members pay an annual subscription which pays for music, a not inconsiderable expense, and allows us to make a donation to church funds.

Our first engagement this year was a short programme of entertainment at Auchlochan, just outside Lesmahagow and thanks are due to everyone for a superb evening. Special mention should be made of the car drivers who successfully found their way there in the dark! It was also the first outing for our banner. We are extremely grateful to the Banner Group who have designed and made this especially for us.

On Friday 11 December, we host the annual Carols by Candlelight in the church. This will follow the usual pattern of musical items from the choir and lots of carol singing by the audience. There might even be a joke or two to get you in the mood! Last year's event is still available to listen to on the church website, under publications. We would love to see a good turnout for the event and some of the proceeds from the evening will go into church funds.

We have one more engagement, in February, when we will be giving a concert at Gilmour/Whitehill Parish Church and preparation for that will be our main focus after Christmas. We hope to have some more new pieces at a suitable standard for that occasion.

Best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year.

Campbell Barr



Monday Club

The Monday Club has now a membership of 70 members and we still have room for a few more! Anyone still thinking of joining us on a Monday afternoon would be made most welcome. Our opening speakers, Linda Ormiston and the Rev Norman McKee were both very well received by a good turnout of members.

We are looking forward to our [Christmas Lunch](#) on 7 December and final meeting of the year on 14•December which is our [Financial AGM and a Christmas Social](#).

On 11 January we have Carole and Alasdair Gordon on "[Sweets we remember](#)".

25 January is our Burns' Afternoon with "[Oor Ain Folk](#)".

8 February, Rona Maxwell tells us "[Laura's Story](#)"

22 February, Rhona Hughes with "[More Musical Tales](#)".

7 March, its a [Musical Quiz](#) hosted by Naida Meek

21 March is our [AGM and Social](#).

On behalf of myself and the committee, we extend our best wishes to all
for a Merry Christmas and a Guid New Year.

Charlie Duguid



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOE BOX APPEAL

As I said last year, Operation Christmas Child is the world's largest children's Christmas project and is run by the Christian relief and development organisation, Samaritan's Purse. Its aim is to bring joy and a smile to the faces of countless children, who will, through no fault of their own, find themselves in the most appalling circumstances this Christmas. The project enables us to make anonymous but nevertheless very special welcome connections with these deserving children by wrapping and filling shoe boxes with great little gifts. A team of UK based volunteers then organise their transportation to Eastern Europe and Africa and their personal delivery to each child.

This year's appeal was launched at the morning Service on Sunday 20 September and members of the congregation were asked to either wrap and fill one or more of their own shoeboxes or use specially pre-decorated boxes provided by the church. A wonderful total of **254 boxes** were filled and returned to be dedicated by our Interim Moderator, Rev Norman McKee, at the morning Service on Sunday 2 Nov.

At 9.30am on Tuesday 3rd November a team from Operation Christmas Child arrived at The Old Parish to start the boxes off on the first leg of their journey, all the way to Lennoxtown!! The van driver's words said it all. 'What a magnificent effort'!

After being 'Customs Checked' the boxes will then be sealed and join thousands more boxes to begin the second leg of their journey, in a fleet of lorries, which would have been returning empty from the UK to some of the poorest areas across eastern Europe and whose drivers volunteer to fill them and deliver the boxes to distribution centres in their respective countries.

At each centre more Samaritan's Purse volunteers will then arrange the last leg of their journey and their delivery to children in a huge number of local schools, hospitals and orphanages. Some will even make it to Africa! Every effort is made to ensure the boxes remain secure throughout their journey and are delivered to each child with their original contents intact. That's the volunteers' top priority and reflects their respect for the fact that each box has been individually, thoughtfully and lovingly packed.

Finally I would like to say a personal and huge '**thank you**' to all members and friends of the congregation who filled one or more boxes and once again made this year's contribution to The Shoe Box appeal so successful. In particular I'm very grateful to:-

Andrea and her kids, Gillian, Euan, Colin and wee Stuart who made up **250** flat packed, pre-decorated boxes and all helped enormously throughout every stage of the process.

Nanette McLean and Nancy Naismith who, once again, so willingly and cheerfully acted as our 'personal shoppers' and helped those of you who wanted to contribute to the appeal but just couldn't tackle shopping for suitable items. By collecting your money and indulging in some very prudent purchasing and housekeeping they managed to fill **69** boxes!

Sandra and Bill Craig and all of their friends and colleagues from The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service for their contribution of **22** boxes!

The Officers and boys of our BB Company who brought the boxes across to the church from the halls, the volunteers who stacked the boxes ready for collection after the Dedication Service and Jim McCartney who kept an accurate tally throughout the operation.

Lastly my thanks go to my long suffering husband who did his usual and stuck his nose into everything that was going on!!

May God bless you for your kindness and bring joy, love and peace to you and your families this Christmas.

Alison Munn



**Operation
Christmas Child**
A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Olá, Amigos da Casa Semear (Hello, Friends of Casa Semear)



www.casaabbaproject.co.uk

Hi Everyone.

What a lot has happened since I last wrote to you.

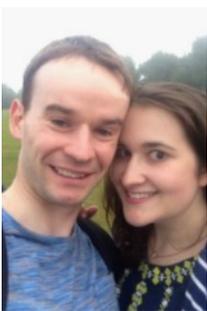
Firstly let me say what a pleasure it was to be back amongst the congregation again. I always receive such a warm welcome from everyone I meet. However, I have to say I did miss my coffee and biscuits after the service, as I normally catch up with so many of you during that time.

Of course it was also such a delight to be able to have the opportunity to talk at the open meeting at the Guild on Wed. 21st Oct. and to bring everyone up to speed on the ongoing missionary work of Robert & Silvana Meikle within Casa Semear in the favelas of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

The connection with the Old Parish should not be taken lightly and as always vital funds raised from the members of the congregation provide essential supplies that keep the community centre going from strength to strength.



At very short notice I informed the Guild about the new ballet class that is now teaching approximately 44 girls at different times in a basement room. The request from the dance instructor was for help in raising the £5 required for each girl to get ballet shoes and an outfit.



This all focusing on a performance at Christmas with all the girls dancing. As usual the generosity of the Old Parish knows no bounds when, between the Guild meeting and the following Sunday, you managed to donate the entire £220 in one go. Amazing. God bless you all.

I can also now confirm that Kirsty and Callum Buchan (pictured above) from St Mary's Episcopal Church in Hamilton have arrived safely in Sao Paulo, Brazil and are staying in the volunteers' flat at Casa Semear. Not only did they arrive but their 4 suitcases which were crammed full of gifts and knitting (again donated by members of the Old Parish Church) arrived as well. It is great to know that the gifts and money donated have been delivered to the children so quickly.

Kirsty and Callum will be working and supporting the team at Casa Semear for three weeks and I know they have been getting stuck in already. As like many of the volunteers before them they are documenting their visit and experiences in text and photos in an online blog. You can already read all about their first days here www.blog.casaabbaproject.co.uk. Please check it out and leave a comment so they know your supporting them and reading the blog.

As you will see from the pictures above Callum plays the bagpipes and it looks like he has become the centre of attraction for the children. I can only imagine the wonder and amazement caused when the sound of the bagpipes is heard across the favela. I wonder what the locals will think is happening as I'm sure they will have heard nothing like it before.

Many thanks once again, your donations, support and prayers continue to change children's lives.

For further information or to receive newsletters or to arrange a presentation either at home or for an organisation, please feel free to contact me either through the website, on Facebook or by email on craig.garrett@burohappold.com or call Craig Garrett on 00971 504501224.

Flower List 2015/2016

December	06	Mrs MacLean	11 Bent Road
	13	Mrs Macintyre	1 Lilac Hill
	20	Mrs Wilson	115 Chatelherault Crescent
	27	Mrs Kinsman	47 Smithycroft
January	03	Mrs Garrett	7 Bent Road
	10	Mrs Maxwell	36 Orchard Brae
	17	Mrs McLuckie	Flat 52, 24 Woodside Walk
	24	Mrs French	27 Bourtree Road
February	31	Mrs Hunter	72 Low Waters Road
	07	Mrs Simpson	138 Kylepark Drive, Uddingston
	14	Mrs Scott	26 Marshall Grove
	21	Mr P Murphy	29 Allanshaw Street
March	28	Mrs Renwick	17 Nethan Gate
	06	Mrs Laird	9 Portwell Mews
	13	Mrs Wright	20 Royellen Avenue

Donations to the fund are always welcome since they assist with the special occasions such as Harvest.

Anyone who organises their flowers through Liz McPherson please note when we are back in the Church the cost will be increased to £25 each Sunday.

Thank you for your generosity and co-operation.

E Gardiner

01698 427852



Flower Delivery

December	06	Mrs F Brown	1A Allanshaw Gardens
	13	Mrs M Henderson	67 Sycamore Drive
	20	Mrs E Gardiner	16 Lilac Hill
	27	Miss M Richardson	50 Eliot Crescent
January	03	Mrs A Henderson	49 Avonbank Crescent
	10	Mrs A Messer	9 Hutchison Street
	17	Mrs J Paterson	134 Chatelherault Crescent
	24	Mrs K Shearer	15 Spruce Avenue
February	31	Mrs A Gibson	5 Scott Grove
	07	Mrs Y Paterson	49 Smithycroft
	14	Mrs R Downie	6 Stonebyres Court
	21	Mrs S Samson	61 Beattock Wynd
March	28	Mrs B Smith	5 Old Avon Road
	06	Mrs H Simpson	20 Oak Lea
	13	Mrs G Keir	6 Mauchline Court

Flowers are usually delivered after the Morning Service. If the date is unsuitable, please try to re-arrange or contact:

Kate Morrow

01698 420748

Rose Bowl List 2015/2016

December	06	F McIntosh
	13	E Reid
January	03	H McGreevy
	17	J Henderson
	24	F Young
	31	L Munn
February	07	J Mathie
	14	M McCartney
	21	A Girasoli
	28	M Wilson
March	13	E Reid



Sunday Flowers

Thank you to everyone who has gifted the flowers, vases and Rose Bowl every week in the year. It is much appreciated. There are some vacant weeks for the Rose Bowl. If anyone is interested please speak to me any Sunday.

Elizabeth Gardiner

Christmas

Would the members of the Flower Circle and anyone interested in helping to decorate the Church for Christmas please meet in the Halls at 9.30am on Friday 4 December.

Elizabeth Gardiner

427852



Safeguarding

Over the past few months, there has been a move by the Church of Scotland to raise the profile of Safeguarding and David and I have received several communications which we have had to bring to the attention of session. Our presbytery representatives had forwarded a presentation which was made to the October meeting of Hamilton Presbytery and which outlined the issues which need to be addressed. Most of these arose from deliverances by The Safeguarding Committee of the General Assembly. We were already well ahead with many of these but not all. With that in mind, we gave copies of the presentation to all elders. Here is a summary of the points raised for your information.

Our congregational register is completely up to date. All volunteers are members of the PVG scheme. However, a new version of the register has been issued and information will be transferred to the new format before the annual inspection of records early in the New Year. I will take responsibility for that with support from David.

A Safeguarding Audit Checklist has been issued and this has to be submitted with the register at the annual inspection of records. (Previously this form was used as a self-assessment tool to help congregations assess how well they were complying with guidelines.) This will be a matter for the Kirk Session to address.

All Safeguarding Panel members, Session Clerks, Ministers, Elders and volunteers on the PVG register must attend training. The responsibility for ensuring this happens lies with our Kirk Session.

The Safe Recruitment Process has to be implemented for all new volunteers. In other words, we cannot just accept an offer of help. Relevant posts have to have a job description; there has to be an interview and references have to be provided. This has implications for organisations and Kirk Session once again.

As I implied, we still have a fair bit of work to do. However, with the good will of everyone concerned, we will hopefully be able to move this forward in the coming year.

Nesella Barr / David Young



Entered into Eternal Life.
"I am the Resurrection and the Life"

*God of grace and peace, in your Son Jesus Christ
 You have given us new birth into a living hope.
 Strengthen us now to live in the power of the resurrection
 and keep us united with our loved one
 from whom in death we are not divided;
 for You live and reign forever and ever. Amen*

*2 September 2015
 Frances Cantley, Maidenlees, Shotlinn Farm, Strathaven*

*7 September 2015
 James Borland, Croftbank House Nursing Home*

*6 October 2015
 Margaret McLaughlin, 5 Woodburn Court*

*6 November 2015
 Archie Frame, Abercorn Care Home*

Baptisms

"Let the children come to me"

*1 November 2015
 Izabella Grace Strain*



*Wishing you a
Merry Christmas*



*and a Happy
New Year*