

November

Issue 155

The Link



**The magazine for the linked congregations and communities
of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood.**

www.west-kirk-polbeth-harwood.co.uk

Minister

Rev Dr Jonanda Groenewald

3 Johnsburn Road Balerno EH14 7DN

Phone: 0131 261 7977 Mobile: 07846 539841

Email: minister@west-kirk-polbeth-harwood.co.uk

Ordained Local Minister

Rev Alison Quilter Mobile: 07741 985597

Email: AQuilter@churchofscotland.org.uk

West Kirk	Polbeth Harwood
Session Clerk	
Alison McNaught	Thomas Griffin
01506 871617	
sessionclerk@westkirkofcalder.co.uk	sessionclerk@polbethharwood.co.uk
Treasurer	
Karen Elliot	Sandra McCabe
01506 418049	01506 872593
treasurer@westkirkofcalder.co.uk	
Safeguarding Coordinator	
Douglas Horn	Eleanor Davidson
01506 419656	01506 873590
West Kirk of Calder (Church of Scotland)	Polbeth Parish Church of Scotland
Charity SC004703 Congregation 020161	Charity SC017373 Congregation 020156
Copyright Licence No. 218743	
Newsletter Editor : Sandra.dixon71@gmail.com	

Letter from the minister

Dear Friends



If you grow up in South Africa, like I did, rugby is in your blood. Every single Saturday throughout the winter, at 3pm, my dad had our whole family sat down in front of the telly, teaching us all the rules of the game as the different teams competed nationally or internationally. So, as you would expect, on Saturday evening, when the Springboks competed in the World Cup final, my 3 boys (hubbie and 2 teenagers) and I, were nailed in front of the screen, biting our nails and shouting in support – as if we were right there in the stadium. And then, when after a very stressful 80 minutes, the whistle blew and South Africa won, we could start breathing again...

In South Africa, rugby is so much more than a sport. It's an opportunity to forget about problems and divisions, and as one, support the boys who make South Africa a proud nation. But watching such an important game only hours before I had to conduct worship the next morning, made me think of all the similarities between the Springboks and a church. The Boks had to work together as a team – supporting each other, almost anticipating each other's moves, all the time while under immense pressure from the opposing team trying to outsmart

them with every move. There wasn't any scope for getting angry or judging someone who made a mistake; and when they achieved their goal, the smiles and hugs and happy tears made for a very special celebration.

That's what we should be like as Christians in the world too. We should work together as a team – we might all be different people, with different ideas and personalities, but together, each with our own talents, we should make a team that can deliver world class results. It so often feels as if the world is against us, but if we stand together, forgive each other, 'train' hard and give absolutely everything we have, we will be able to achieve our goal. So let's catch that ball, lift each other up, defend our faith, and stay focused on why we are here in the first place. Because if we do all this – our reward will be even more spectacular than a golden cup...

The Springboks pray before every game, and when they score, they thank God. Let's do the same – let's live our lives prayerfully and in thanksgiving. Let's do everything we do, to the glory of God's name.

May God bless you all,
Nanda

Reflection based on Hebrews 12:1,2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Every year up and down the country folk assemble at various times of the day or night to run for charity. A select few will take the run seriously to beat the other competitors after months of punishing training, but the majority will run for fun to raise much-needed funds for charity. Far from competing against each other, they run together, the race a shared experience undertaken in a spirit of unity.

The same holds true in terms of faith. Our race is not one in which we strive to outdo each other. Rather, we participate alongside a great company of saints, past, present and future, from whom we can draw encouragement and inspiration that we pass onto others in turn.

Reflect, then, on those who have gone before you, consider those who will come after, and give thanks for those who run now, recognising what you can receive from them and also give. You will struggle to run the race on your own, for it's a

marathon not a sprint. You need to hold on to the knowledge that you are part of something bigger than yourself, part of a great company engaged in the same undertaking, serving and seeking the same goal. Let's run this race together supporting each other as we move forward in our mission of bringing the good news to others.

Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you that I do not have to run the race of Christian discipleship on my own. Thank you for those who have gone before me, especially those who have displayed special faith and dedication. Thank you for those across the world who follow you today, seeking to follow in Christ's footsteps and be true to his way. Teach me to learn from Him and from others, so that I may run my own race faithfully as I can and in some small way help others to run theirs in turn.

Rev Alison Quilter



“Don’t limit your challenges;

Challenge your limits.”

Avinash Wandre

MERCY SHIPS 2023

Senegal

In March 2023, jubilant crew and patients watches as first patient, young Amadou and his care giver walked up the gangway of Global mercy ship to receive his treatment. Four-year-old Amadou was born with one wind swept leg and one bowed leg, even sitting for a meal was painful. He will have two operations as both conditions can be corrected by early intervention. His family are looking forward to him walking properly and to be like others.

There are 40 planned paediatric orthopaedic operations this month and over the next four months, Global Mercy will provide 800 free surgeries.

For the first time, one ship will serve two countries through one port at the invitation of the Senegalese government up to 25% of the surgery patients are expected from nearby The Gambia. Field service will also provide training and mentoring for more than 2500 participants.

AUGUST 25TH 2023

Global mercy has now been welcomed into the port of Freetown for 10 months – until June 2024.

Volunteer surgeons, teachers, physiotherapists, anaesthetists, admin staff and even the captain of the ship are on board from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Now in 2023 hope and healing will come anew as 2350 free surgeries are performed on board.

Sierra Leone is a rapidly growing country and while strides have been made in recent years, it still has health care challenges specifically, access to safe and timely surgical procedures. Mercy ships will provide training for 200 local healthcare professionals to help with this situation.

Christmas is just around the corner and we are all struggling with cash but, if you can afford a donation for mercy ships I will collect it on the 19th November.

Together we can help save lives.

Lillias Fairley

IMAGINE CHRISTMAS WITHOUT GIFTS!



Each year thousands of people are sitting in a prison cell wishing they were home with their family. Most of these are dads but there are some mums also. It is estimated that over 20,000+ children

are affected by the imprisonment of a parent every year in Scotland. And Christmas is a particularly difficult time for all.

Thirty-eight years ago Rev Murie, a Chaplain at Saughton prison in Edinburgh, asked his congregation at Kirkliston parish church to collect presents that could be given to the children. He fully appreciated the pressures on families over Christmas and 38 years later it's still going!



This is due to an amazing Prison Officer, **Colin O'Flaherty**. For the last 20 years he has driven around, in his own time, picking up gifts from more than 24 churches all over the Lothians and Fife.

He helps organise their wrapping. Then on a special day the dads can hand over brand new, beautifully wrapped gifts to their children. In 2022 Colin received an award from Princess Anne to recognise this amazing work.

And this year we can all join in to make Christmas that little bit more special for children whose dads are in Saughton.

WHAT CAN I GIVE?

- Only NEW, UNOPENED and UNWRAPPED gifts can be given (this is for security reasons - the prison has to know what is being handed over by a prisoner before it is wrapped).
- Gifts should be for children up to the age of 12, although Colin says that gifts for early teenagers are also welcome.
- Ideal gifts are TOYS, BOOKS TO READ and ACTIVITY BOOKS



- Please do NOT give cash
- PRISONERS WEEK 2023 19th to 25th November

You are invited to the Prisoners Week Launch Service Sunday 19th November
at 3.30pm

Letham St Marks, Rannoch Rd, Perth PH1 2HH

Or WATCH ONLINE at www.prisonersweek.org.uk

8,000

Locked up in
our prisons
every night

This years' theme is STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY. For many 2023 has been exhausting – coming out of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and now Gaza and Israel, the cost of living crisis not to mention the environmental crisis and associated

2,000+

people who
are awaiting
trial

natural disasters. It has also been especially stressful for people in prison. One of the lingering effects of Covid on our Criminal Justice system is a backlog in the courts which is having a devastating effect not only on the number of people in prison but also on those waiting to be tried. This has led to overcrowding, more time locked up, less access to activities more frustration and aggression, and not least, 25% of all people in prison at present have not been convicted of anything, with many spending months even years waiting for a trial.

- One particular person spent two years in prison missing their child's first and second birthday, before being tried. They were released by the courts as they had served the 2-month sentence given by the Judge 12 times over. Of those 2,000 on remand (awaiting trial) at the moment 50% of them will be released with no conviction whatsoever. Lives are turned upside down in the meantime.
- Where can people find the strength for such circumstances? This year we are invited to think about how Elijah was provided with what he needed in exhausting and difficult circumstances: rest, a gentle presence, a reminder to keep going, food, water ...practical things along with encouragement. Strength for the Journey!
- Find out more about Prisoners Week on the website www.prisonersweek.org.uk or ask Rev Dr Sheena Orr



The Quiet Service

A monthly mid-week quiet service in Polbeth Harwood will next be held on **Wednesday 15 November at 3:30pm** in the 'quiet room'. All are welcome to this short service followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a 'blether'.

Anyone who would like to come and needs assistance with transport should call Sandra Dixon on 07855861223.

We look forward to seeing you there.



"To think we grumbled when the Church used unintelligible archaic language!"

The Bridge



'16 to 25-year olds'

'The Bridge' for young folk aged 16 to 25 years old will be held quarterly. A get together and have a blether, sharing a meal or light snack and explore our faith and discuss things that matter to you as young folk in 21stC.

If you are interested please get in touch with me or Nanda and bring a friend along too!

We next meet in Polbeth Harwood Café Area on Wednesday 6th December at 7pm. The Bridge let's stay connected!

Nanda and Alison



TeenTime Primary 7 upwards

The next meeting of TeenTime is on **Sunday 19th November at 6:15pm** in West Kirk Hall and we hope to see you all there for an evening of sharing our faith, fun and friendship. Bring a friend along. It's a fun evening of games, mystery challenges and much more.

Future Dates for the first half of the session are:

Sunday 10 December

We hope to encourage some of the young folk to take a lead with some of the evening's activities.....

Alison, Reeta and Nanda



At our Harvest Thanksgiving Collection we supported the Foodbank with a donation of 82.4kg of essential items. This is the equivalent of 196 meals. Our contribution to the Foodbank is received with grateful thanks and the promise that it will be used to support those in West Lothian who are in crisis.

This time of year is always a hard time for many families in the build up to Christmas and it is especially hard when we are in the midst of a cost of living crisis. The Foodbank is supporting an ever-increasing number of people and your support is needed so much. This year's Reverse Advent calendar has been issued and it would be great if you could use it as a focus for donating to the Foodbank. You can collect the items by yourself, as a family or as a group of friends. If you could please bring the completed Reverse Advent Calendars to either Church on Sunday 3rd December I will make sure that they are taken to the warehouse.

In the last few weeks the Foodbank has passed the 70,000 figure of people supported in West Lothian since the Foodbank started in 2012. This means that 70,000 people have not gone to bed hungry thanks to the support of the people of West Lothian.

Thank you for any support that you can give

Douglas Horn



Anyone who would like to donate but would prefer to have someone else do the shopping, Sandra Dixon is happy to accept cash donations and will purchase items on your behalf.

REMEMBERING REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

As we approach Remembrance Sunday I've been thinking about services which were held in the church I attended in Glasgow, Maxwell Parish Church, which unfortunately was demolished as were several others many years ago to make way for the Kingston Bridge part of the M8 motorway.

Our minister Rev J E Gillon was a first world war veteran, I'm not sure whether he served as a soldier or if he was a padre during the conflict but he had a very impressive array of medals which he wore on his ministerial robes for the Remembrance Service or Armistice Parade as we called it.

I like to watch the Festival of Remembrance from the Royal Albert hall and watch with my heart in my mouth & my fingers crossed when the various Royal British Legion branches come down those flights of stairs carrying their beautiful standards and always breathe a sigh of relief when everyone has safely negotiated their way into the hall without anyone stumbling (especially the Chelsea Pensioners).

Services in Maxwell Parish Church for Remembrance Sunday in the 1950s were very much a time for remembering those in our congregation and surrounding Parish who had been killed during the 1st & 2nd world wars but I also remember it as a celebration of victory as the 1939/45 conflict was still very much in the minds of those who had lived through the Blitz. So on Remembrance Sunday the youth organisations paraded after the service and the Rev JE Gillon took the

salute. Lots of preparation took place in the weeks running up to the service with the Brownies, Life boys, Girl Guides & Boys Brigade all practising marching in time. The week before the parade everyone came together for a dress rehearsal and we marched accompanied by the Boys Brigade Pipe Band. In charge was the BB captain, Captain Sloan, who on reflection reminds me of Captain Mainwaring from Dad's Army, he was quite a pompous little man. We in the BB and Girl Guides called him Leftie as he used to lead the parade off by shouting instructions "Parade, by the left quick march, left, left, left right left, and we would set off some of us skipping to make sure we had started on the correct foot.

On these occasions the Boys Brigade and Girl Guides paraded their company flags, and this involved a great deal of rehearsal. Both BB and Guides had Queen's Colours and Company Colours, and these would be brought in during the singing of the first Hymn. My first introduction to being part of the Colour Party was as an escort, two of us following the flag bearer two steps behind down the aisle. When we were ready to enter the Church Sergeant Bobby Clark who was carrying the BB flag would bellow(and I mean bellow , he was a huge big fellow with a voice to match) "Colour Party by the left slow march " As we approached the bottom of the aisle his next equally loud command was "Colour Party left and right turn and we would then proceed to the front of the communion table and the Minister would take the flags from us and lean them against the pulpit. On this occasion as we reached the bottom of the aisle Bobby , a bit too exuberantly, gave the left and right order and as he swivelled round one of the huge tassels attached to the flag whacked me on the ear. I'm sure my ear smarted for the rest of the service. I had the privilege on another couple of occasions to carry the Guide colours into the church and after the

service we stood on either side of the Minister outside the church with our flags . There were gardens down the centre of the street and the parade would march down , led by Captain Sloan and the pipe band, the Minister would take the salute and they would parade round and up on the other side of the gardens where the parade was dismissed. I can't ever remember it raining, it was usually a crisp frosty Autumn morning with the trees in the gardens shedding their leaves in the sunshine, but I'm sure there must have been some awful days too, it wouldn't be Scotland otherwise.

When I see all the flags at the Royal Albert Hall I wonder if the standard bearers take them home with them to clean them before the event, that was one of the responsibilities of the one carrying the colours at our services. Our Queen's Colour wasn't too bad it had a sort of pointed end which was enamelled but the Guide flag had a huge trefoil badge which was brass and had to be cleaned with Duraglit until it shone. This badge added to the weight of the flag which also had heavy tassels so standing outside the church for sometimes half an hour or more holding the flags was quite an ordeal, so I admire those representing the Royal British Legion Branches who I'm sure must be standing ready for quite a while holding these flags before having to negotiate those stairs.

Now that I've had my trip down memory lane it's sad to think that all these years ago we thought we were celebrating the end of war and here we are today seventy odd years later still praying for peace in so many conflicts around our world .

Margaret Hogg

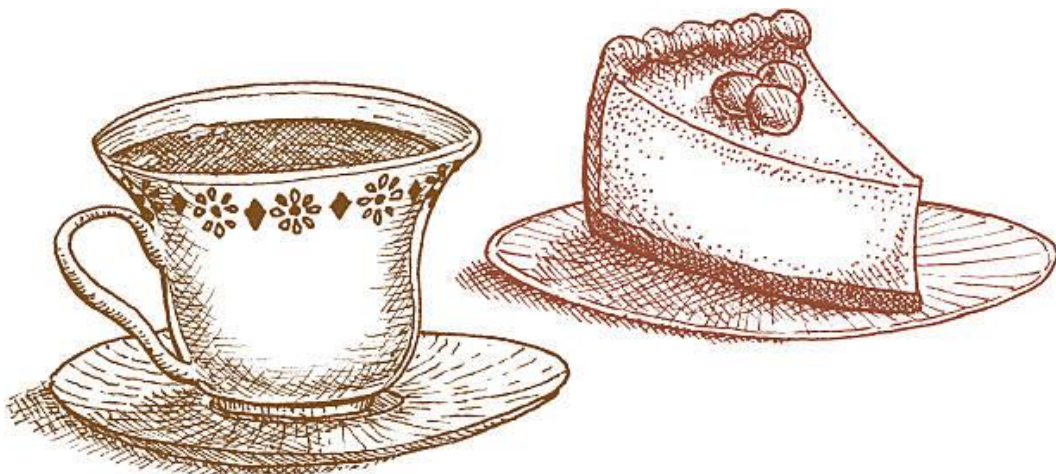
WEST KIRK CHRISTMAS CAFÉ

The West Kirk will hold their Christmas Kirk Café on Saturday 2nd December

Tea /Coffee with mince pie or shortbread will be served between 10 & 11.30 and soup, filled rolls or a sausage roll from 11.30 – 1 pm

There will be the usual stalls , home baking & preserves, tombola, raffles and our craft stall where you might just see something just that little bit different to give as a Christmas gift or stocking filler. Activities for the children will be available too so put the date in your diary and come along and enjoy our festive fun

Donations of home baking, raffle & tombola prizes will be gratefully received and look out for a quiz sheet and special raffle prize which will be on show during November when having your after-service cup of tea .



HEAVEN'S GROCERY STORE

**I was walking down life's highway a long time ago.
One day I saw a sign that said, 'Heaven's Grocery Store.'**

**As I got a little closer, the door came open wide,
And when I came to myself, I was standing inside.
I saw a host of ANGELS. They were standing everywhere.**

One handed me a basket and said, 'My child shop with care.'

**Everything a Christian needed was in the Grocery Store.
And all you couldn't carry; you could come back the next day for more.**

**First, I got some PATIENCE, LOVE was in the same row,
Further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need that everywhere you go.**

**I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH.
I couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST for it was all over the place.**

I stopped to get some STRENGTH and COURAGE to help me run this race.

By then my basket was getting full, but I remembered some GRACE.

**I didn't forget SALVATION for SALVATION is free,
So I tried to get enough of that to save both you and me.
Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocery bill,
For I thought I had everything to do my MASTER'S will.
As I went up the aisle I saw PRAYER and I just had to put that in,
For I knew when I stepped outside, I would run right into sin.**

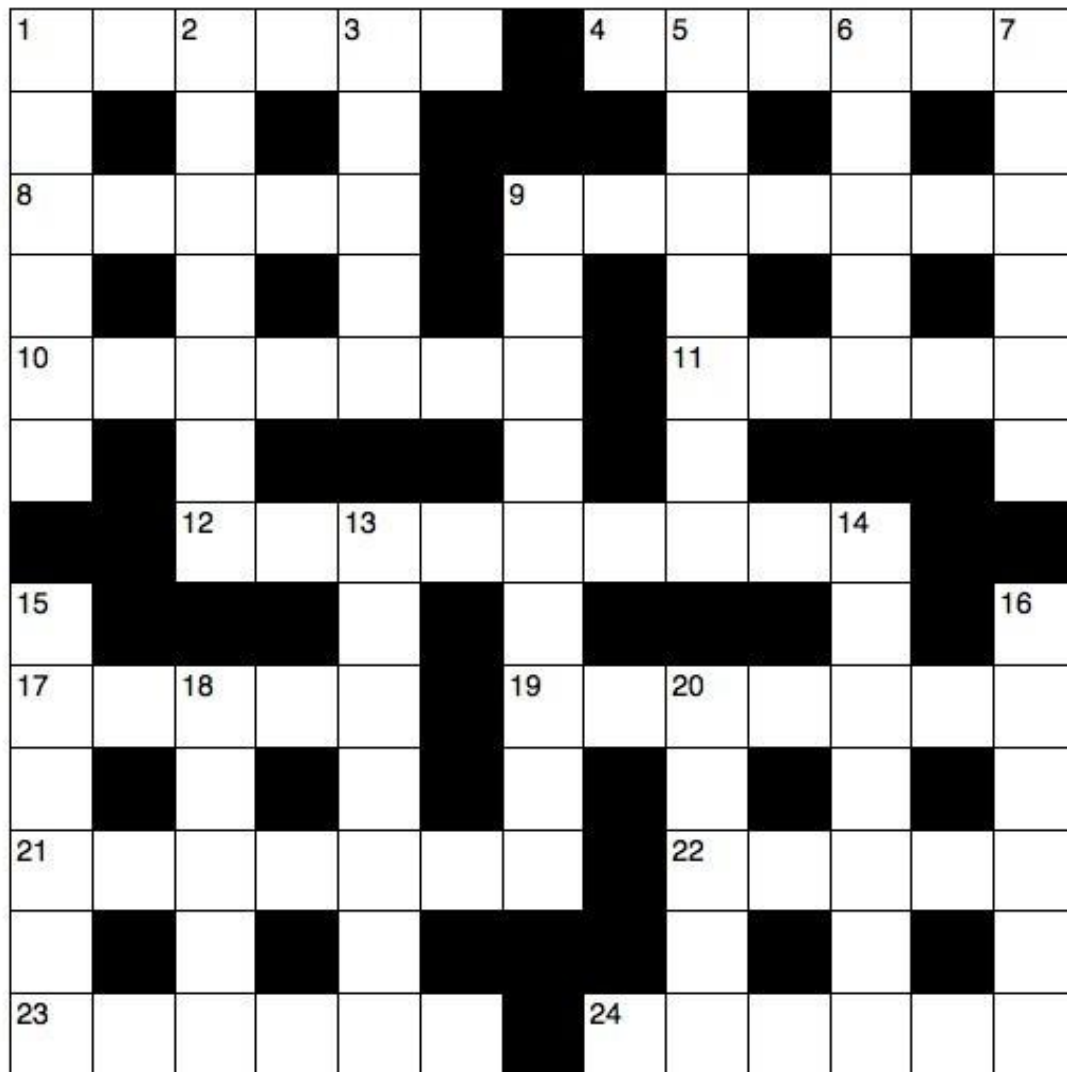
PEACE and JOY were plentiful; they were on the last shelf.

SONG and PRAISES were hanging near, so I just helped myself.

**Then I said to the Angel, 'Now, how much do I owe?'
He just smiled and said, 'Just take them everywhere you go.'**

Again, I said, 'How much do I really owe?' He smiled again and said:

'MY CHILD, JESUS PAID YOUR BILL A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.'



Across

1 'The Lord Jesus... took bread, and when he had given — , he broke it' (1 Corinthians 11:24) (6)

4 'He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his — over me is love' (Song of Songs 2:4) (6)

8 Surrey town that

hosts the National Christian Resources Exhibition (5)

9 Also known as Abednego (Daniel 1:7) (7)

10 Liken (Isaiah 40:18) (7)

11 A son of Etam, descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:3) (5)

12 A part of the temple where the blood of a young bull was to be smeared (Ezekiel 45:19) (9)

17 'They make many promises, take false — and make agreements' (Hosea 10:4) (5)

19 Roman province to which Paul returned after evangelizing it on his first missionary journey (Acts 16:6) (7)

21 Material used to make baby Moses' basket (Exodus 2:3) (7)

22 'And feeble as — , in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail' (5)

23 'The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep — to his voice'
(John10:3) (6)

24 Stalk carrying the sponge of wine vinegar given to Christ on the cross (John
19:29) (6)

Down

1 Elijah dug one round the altar he built on Mount Carmel and filled it with
water (1 Kings 18:32) (6)

2 'I am not — of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of
everyone who believes' (Romans 1:16) (7)

3 Buddhist term relating to belief in reincarnation (5)

5 Damascus disciple who, at God's command, restored the sight of the blinded
Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:12) (7)

6 and 16 Horses: their sound (Jeremiah 50:11) (5) and their gait (Joel 2:4) (6)

7 A three (anag.) (6)

9 Athenian council addressed memorably by Paul (Acts 17:22) (9)

13 Abide by (Galatians 3:5) (7)

14 Persian princes (Daniel 3:2) (7)

15 Force (Galatians 6:12) (6)

16 See 6 Down (6)

18 Paste (anag.) (5)

20 How the cedars of Lebanon are described (Isaiah 2:13) (5)

ANSWERS FROM ISSUE 154

ACROSS: 1, Deacon. 4, Appear. 7, Wits. 8, Heavenly. 9, Argument. 13, Mob. 16, Broken-
hearted. 17, Ran. 19, Suddenly. 24, Obstacle. 25, John. 26, Enable. 27, Market.

DOWN: 1, Dawn. 2, Afternoon. 3, Nehum. 4, Again. 5, Prey. 6, All to. 10, Users. 11, Ephod.
12, Trace. 13, Metalwork. 14, Body. 15, Eber. 18, Alban. 20, Uncle. 21, Dream. 22, Stab. 23,
Gnat.

Polbeth Harwood Church New Style Christmas Fayre

A reminder that Polbeth Harwood Church Christmas Fayre is on Saturday 25th November 2pm – 4pm.

So far, we are pleased to say we have Body Shop at Home, Slimming World, Chelle Chic creations, Crafted by Nana, Knots by Nicola, Crafty Coo Jewellery, Knitted baby goods, Crochet goods and, of course, home baking and teas.

Make sure you bring the children along to meet Santa in his very own Grotto!!

Keep an eye on our Facebook page to see more sellers who will be there to help with your Christmas shopping!

If you want to rent a table, please message us on Facebook or send an email to Sandra.dixon71@gmail.com. It is £15 per table.

WEEKLY OFFERING

Just a reminder that you can pay your offering by standing order. If you don't already have the bank details speak to Karen Elliot at West Kirk or Sandra McCabe at Polbeth.

If you are a tax payer, remember to sign your gift aid form to allow the church to claim tax back.

ANNUAL BEREAVEMENT SERVICE

for all in both communities
takes place in

**Polbeth Harwood
Church**

on

Sunday 3rd December at 3pm

The service, conducted by Rev Dr Jonanda Groenewald
and Rev Alison Quilter

will be followed by tea in the café area.

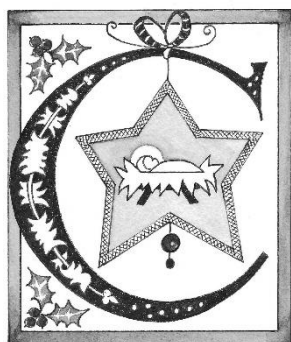
All those who have lost loved ones—
relatives and friends—and would like the opportunity to
remember their lives,
are welcome to attend this special service





November 23

Thursday	2 nd	Board & Session	West Kirk	19.00
Friday	3 rd	Service of Remembrance	Polbeth Harwood	19.00
Sunday	5 th	Morning Worship	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Bible Class	West Kirk	09.45
Wednesday	8 th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk	11.30
Thursday	9 th	Beyond Kirk Wall Services	Dickson Court	14.00
			Burngrange Home	15.30
Friday	10 th	Schools' remembrance service	War Memorial West Calder	11.00
Sunday	12 th	United Service of Remembrance	West Kirk	09.45
Wednesday	15 th	Reflective Service	Polbeth Harwood	15.30
Sunday	19 th	Morning Worship	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Teen Time	West Kirk	18.15
Friday	24 th	Youth Group	West Kirk Hall	19.00
Saturday	25 th	Christmas Fayre	Polbeth Harwood	14.00
Sunday	26 th	Morning Worship	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
Thursday	30 th	Bible Study	via Zoom	19.00



December 23

Saturday	2 nd	Christmas Kirks' Cafe	West Kirk	10.00
Sunday	3 rd	Holy Communion	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Bible Class	West Kirk	09.45
		Bereavement Service	Polbeth Harwood	15.00
Wednesday	6 th	The Bridge	Polbeth Café	19.00
Sunday	10 th	Gift Service	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Teen Time	West Kirk	18.15
Wednesday	13 th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk	11.30
Thursday	14 th	Beyond Kirk Wall	Dickson Court	14.00
		Services	Burngrange Home	15.30
Sunday	17 th	United Service of Lessons & Carols	Polbeth Harwood	10.30
		Community Christmas Music	West Kirk	19.00
Wednesday	20 th	Parkhead School Xmas Service	West Kirk	09.30
Sunday	24 th	United Nativity Service	West Kirk	10.30
		Family Service	Polbeth Harwood	18.30
		Watchnight Service	West Kirk	23.30
Sunday	31 st	United Morning Worship	Polbeth Harwood	10.30

Parish Record

Deaths

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

To all who have lost a loved one we extend our sincere sympathies and prayers.

10th October – Thomas Meiklejohn, Cuthill Brae, West Calder

Lord of compassion and love,
surround all with your grace and peace.

May there be comfort in knowing that,
even in the darkest of days,
your flame of hope and care flickers alive.

As we reflect on the deep scars of conflict that mark our world,
we pray for so many communities
deeply in need of love and care-
and remember you are the God of such gracious love. Amen

Church Flowers



If you know of anyone - whether housebound, bereaved, unwell or celebrating a special anniversary – who would appreciate a wee minding from our congregations by way of the church flowers, please contact :

At West Kirk – Rhoda Lawton rhodalawton@gmail.com

At Polbeth Harwood – Margaret Marr

In memory of Mary (Paddy) Reid

Paddy was born on the 2nd of February 1947 in Mossend, Polbeth. She was one of 13, and she was so proud to be a part of such a great family – the ‘Gray Gang’, as she called it.

She learnt very quickly how to use her ‘youngest sister status’ on her brothers and had them all wrapped around her little finger... She had a wonderful relationship with her brothers and sisters, and they all agree she was spoilt rotten by them all.

You may wonder why Mary was called “Paddy”... Well the story behind this is – she asked her brother Jim for a haircut like Doris Day. Jim did as he was asked, and when finished, he said: “There you go Paddy, you look like Paddy Blackwood.” Seemingly Paddy Blackwood was a farmer who rode a horse through Bellsquarry and had a ‘bowl cut’ hairstyle! The name has stuck from then on.

Her working career began in “Cairns & Rawson”, a bottling plant in Edinburgh. Her sister Betty started a couple of weeks before Mary and was not enjoying her work as the workers were not so friendly towards her. Once Mary started, she soon let them know that sisters are strong and put everyone in their place and, as you can imagine, there was no more bother from that point. Then she worked in TCC/Plessey, Bias Binding, Slumberdown, Burroughs/Unisys, Motorola – all with one common denominator – she never left a job, it was always company closures that made her redundant.

Next in her life was George (“Geordie”), who she met whilst he was an apprentice butcher in the Co-Operative shop in West Calder. They were married in the West Kirk of Calder, West Calder on “Guy Fawkes Day”, and started their married life in Blackburn, before moving to Polbeth.

They were keen on trips away, firstly in the UK and later abroad. There were some great times for them both before George sadly passed away in May 1997.

Mary and George had a daughter, Karen, who is a mirror image of her mother in both looks and nature. The two of them were very close. Karen has always had the same work ethic and caring nature as her mum. And she was also spoilt by all Paddy’s brothers and sisters.

Karen got married to Alan, and they gave Mary her best ever present – 2 lovely Grandchildren – Kayleigh & Kyle. She adored them both and made sure they never wanted for anything. Always giving them the best advice, and, when needed, bringing them back down to earth.

Paddy first came to Polbeth Harwood Church with her sister, Betty, when their mother was ill, and David Robertson (who was the minister here at the time) started to visit Mrs Gray.

Paddy soon became involved in the life of the congregation in various ways. She faithfully attended worship on Sundays, and soon started helping wherever she could. She was on the cleaning rota and enjoyed

helping at Church Fayres. She took over organising the tombola stall and collected goods for prizes immediately after one Fayre in preparation for the next. She also made tablet for the baking stall.

When we had our 60th anniversary of the opening of our building we had commemorative pens for sale, and Paddy sold almost all the pens we had singlehandedly! That just shows how dedicated she was.

She loved the JAM Club trips to Silver Sands Beach at Aberdour. She always came along with a group of her friends, and they all had a great time.

Paddy visited *many* people in the community and she was always willing to lend a hand wherever she could. She visited regularly in Stewart Court and Dickson Court, and she even travelled to visit people who had moved away from the area. She called the Bingo numbers in Stewart Court and organised concerts. She was a regular at the Community Centre in West Calder and was a member of the lunch club. She was always picking people up and giving them a lift to wherever they needed or wanted to be. Paddy loved our community, and no doubt every single person in our community knew her and loved her back. She wasn't called Mrs Cauther for nothing!

Her family describes Paddy as a character, larger than life, always upfront and honest, someone who brought a smile to everyone when she entered the room, someone who thought of others first before herself; dependable, and always wanting to help others.

Paddy had a full and meaningful life. She made a difference in the lives of so many people, and she will be dearly missed... She passed away on the 22 of August 2023, with Karen and Alan by her side.

May she rest in peace.

