

# The Link



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

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## A Word From Our Minister

The Manse  
27 Learmonth Crescent  
West Calder  
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Sunday, 18th November 2007

Dear Friends

Though it hasn't arrived as I write this, it will have by the time you read it – welcome to the Season of Advent!

Again in our Advent services this year we will spend time preparing ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

And again, before too long, you will get a leaflet through your door with the details of the Christmas services for all the churches in our villages. As well as the Sunday services, there will be Christmas Eve services in both our churches again this year. At the Christmas Eve Family service at Polbeth Harwood, again we would like to invite children aged around eight and under to come dressed as Mary, Joseph, the donkey, the innkeeper, shepherds, angels, wise men, kings and the star and join in the Nativity story with us. And of course, there will be the Christmas Eve Watch-night Service at the West Kirk with candles, carols, readings, and drama.



After the success of our united services the last couple of years we will be gathering in each other's churches for united services on the last Sunday of this year and the first Sunday of 2008. Please see the details of services in this issue of The Link. Of course, you are very welcome to any or all of our services over this festive season!

To help prepare for Advent, I've included a piece by Dietrich Bonhoeffer for you to read, called 'This reversal of all things:'



*If we want to be part of these events, Advent and Christmas, we cannot just sit there like a theatre audience and enjoy all the lovely pictures. Instead, we ourselves will be caught up in this action, this reversal of all things; we must become actors on this stage. For this is a play in which each spectator has a part to play, and we cannot hold back.*

*What will our role be? Worshipful shepherds bending the knee, or kings bringing gifts? What is being enacted when Mary becomes the mother of God, when God enters the world in a lowly manger?*

*We cannot come to this manger in the same way we would approach the cradle of any other child. Something will happen to each one of us who decides to come to Christ's manger. Each of us will have been judged or redeemed before we go away. Each of us will either break down, or come to know that God's mercy is turned toward us ...*

*What does it mean to say such things about the Christ child? ... It is God, the Lord and Creator of all things, who becomes so small here, comes to us in a little corner of the world, unremarkable and hidden away, who wants to meet us and be among us as a helpless, defenceless child.*

(From Christmas with Dietrich Bonhoeffer,  
Augsberg Books, 2005)

In the meantime, best wishes for Advent, a very merry Christmas and a happy and peaceful New Year!

*David A Albon*

Rev David A Albon  
Minister of the Parish Churches of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood

## **Worship in the Linked Congregations**

### **1st Sunday of Advent – Sunday 2nd December**

Sacrament of Communion:

West Kirk – 9.30 am, Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

United Communion at West Kirk – 6.30 pm

### **2nd Sunday of Advent – Sunday 9th December**

Morning Worship at West Kirk – 9.30 am

Morning Worship at Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

### **3rd Sunday of Advent – Sunday 16th December**

Gift Service at West Kirk – 9.30 am

Morning Worship at Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

### **Friday 21st December**

Parkhead Primary School Christmas Service at West Kirk – 9.30 am

### **4th Sunday of Advent – Sunday 23rd December**

West Kirk Youth Link Christmas Service – 9.30 am

Morning Worship at Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

### **Christmas Eve – Monday 24th December**

Family Nativity Service at Polbeth Harwood – 7 pm

Watchnight Service at West Kirk – 11.30 pm

### **Sunday 30th December – Last Sunday of 2007**

United All-Age Service at West Kirk – 9.30 am

*(Please note: there will **not** be a service at Polbeth Harwood this morning)*

### **Sunday 6th January 2008 – Epiphany – First Sunday of New Year**

United All-Age Service at Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

*(Please note: there will **not** be a service at the West Kirk this morning)*

# The Parish Record

## West Calder

### *Baptism*

**14th October** – Aaron Smythe, Meadows Avenue, Bathgate

### *Funeral*

**2nd November** – David Drysdale, Harburn Drive

## West Kirk Fundraising Group Report

The church hall was full for the Whist Drive in October, which raised the excellent total of £420. For organising and supporting this event many thanks go to Margaret Lamb, her family and friends. Thanks also go to the Fund Raising Group members and friends who set up the tables in the afternoon and catered with sandwiches and baking, served and cleared up afterwards. All very much appreciated to make it an enjoyable evening.

The Christmas Candy Bar, by now, will be a memory – hopefully a good one!

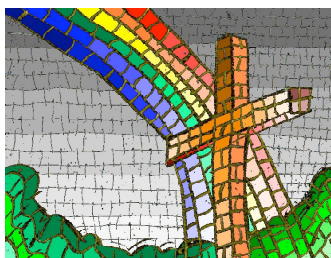
The Group wishes all our friends and regulars a very happy Christmas and a good New Year.



The first Candy Bar of 2008 is on Saturday 2nd February. Look forward to seeing you there.

*Jill Murray (Convener)*

## Stained Glass Window



Forty years ago, in a church in Yorkshire, a stained glass window of great beauty was being dedicated to God. “What’s it for?” whispered a small girl. Her father replied. “It’s in memory of all the men and women who died in the services.”

There was an anxious pause, before the little girl asked, “Did they die in the morning services or the evening services?”

## West Kirk Guild Report

### Dates for your diary:

Thursday – 6th December	Outing to Leith Mills, Edinburgh (Christmas Shopping)
Thursday – 13th December	“Christmas Rally” St John’s Church
Monday – 17th December	Guild Christmas Party

The Guild Coffee Morning on Saturday 3rd November made the grand total of £750, thanks to all who helped.

On Monday 5th November the speaker was Helen Hay from Alzheimer's Scotland, a very interesting and enjoyable evening.

*Moira Jack (Secretary)*

### Short Christmas Jokes

What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? It's Christmas, Eve!

How do you make an idiot laugh on Boxing Day? Tell him a joke on Christmas Eve!



### Pastoral Care Notes

The Christmas Party (all welcome) is on Friday 14th December at 7 pm in the West Kirk Church hall. Tickets (£5) may be obtained from Bill Russell 01506 871693; Victor & Janet Ferguson 01506 871648 or Jill Murray 01506 871755.

In order to arrange catering it would be appreciated if you could buy your tickets as soon as possible (first come first served) but by Wednesday 12th December. After a buffet meal, we shall have games, dances and cards – enjoyment is compulsory!

The Scots Night is on Friday 8th February 2008; tickets will be on sale in the New Year.

May I thank my committee for the work that they have done throughout the year and on their behalf wish you a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2008.

*Bill Russell*

## Christmas Post



A woman went into a post office to buy some stamps for her Christmas cards.

“What denomination do you want?” asked the lady at the counter.

“Good God!” she replied, “Has it come to this? I suppose you'd better give me twenty Catholic and twenty Protestant.”

## Christmas Music

The West Kirk Choir augmented by friends and Mure Memorial Choir (Garrowhill) presents an evening of Christmas music on Friday 21st December at 7 pm in the church. All are welcome to attend and enjoy some Christmas fare in the hall afterwards. Come and listen to and sing carols old and new.

*Bill Russell*

## Christmas Prayer

“Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake, Amen!”

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## There's More to Christmas...

There's more, much more to Christmas  
Than candle-light and cheer;  
It's the spirit of sweet friendship  
That brightens all the year;  
It's thoughtfulness and kindness,  
It's hope reborn again,  
For peace, for understanding  
And for goodwill to men!



*Author Unknown*

## Scout Post

Would you like your Christmas Cards delivered? The Scouts will deliver your Christmas post in Polbeth & West Calder (please no outlying areas) for 15p per card.

To take advantage of this fabulous service, cards and money should be placed in the boxes in The West Kirk Hall, Polbeth Harwood Church, the Library or handed in to Jean Walkinshaw at home.

All cards should be handed in by Sunday 16th December.



## Wanted!

Could you be a leader/adult helper for the Beavers and Cubs?

Anyone interested in this rewarding role should contact Jean Walkinshaw 01506 873638.



## West Kirk – Eco-Congregation

At the last Session Meeting it was agreed to purchase a compost bin to make a trial of composting the organic material (grass cuttings mostly) from the Church grounds. I hope that, if we add in paper towels and the weekly orders of service, compost can be made which can be used and what goes into the grey bins will be much reduced.



### Green Tip

At the Christmas Candy Bar the Youth Link Trackers Group will be selling cotton bags for use as an alternative to plastic bags to convey the environmental message 'Reduce, reuse, recycle'. We hope, if we can master the technological side of things, to have the children's own designs printed on these bags, but at the time of going to print I'm afraid it is not certain that we will succeed. Your support in choosing to purchase the bags will be appreciated. There is talk of supermarkets starting to 'outlaw' plastic bags, by charging an unattractively high price for them – so take this chance to get prepared, and start a good habit.

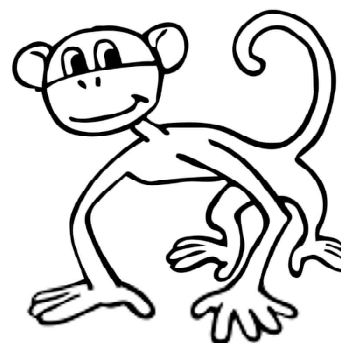
*Rosanna Rabaeijs*



## A Word From Cheeky Monkey

We went, we saw, we puppeted!

We were very impressed with the standard of performance shown by teams of puppeteers who had travelled to compete and perform from places ranging from Peterhead to Gateshead. Many of the teams were young people from churches and youth groups. Their puppets sang, danced, rapped, played the saxophone or even the drums, and presented stories like The Bus Stop Samaritan and The Prodigal Bart. The audience were enthusiastic participants too, probably because most of us know what it is like to be up there at the front looking for a reaction! The whole day was great fun for people and puppets alike.



Most of the performances were done with the puppets held overhead and the puppeteers behind a stage with very impressive backdrops, sound effects and music. This was rather daunting to a humble monkey like myself but the workshops gave some very useful tips on working with all sorts of puppets to get a message across. The team of tutors were expert performers with years of experience and in some cases even ventriloquist or magic skills.

The aim of the whole event was to equip and inform people to use their puppets and the skills God has given them to do His work. It was stressed that we don't do it to look good (that comes as a by-product when the monkey's so handsome), but to serve God and bring His good news to people in entertaining and non-threatening ways. The advice given was very practical and of instant use. For example, if working solo, rehearse in front of the bedroom mirror, but close the curtains first to avoid concerning your neighbours!

Aileen and I were brave enough to enter a lip-synching competition - we didn't win but it was fun to be up and having a go at singing along to the music. Not sure we'll be using that technique in church soon but you never know....

*Cheeky Monkey*

## Shopping for a Turkey

It was Christmas Eve in a supermarket and a woman was anxiously picking over the last few remaining turkeys in the hope of finding a large one.

In desperation she called over a shop assistant and said "Excuse me. Do these turkeys get any bigger?"

"No" he replied, "They're all dead".



## Life & Work – December Issue

The Editorially Independent Magazine of the Church of Scotland  
[www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org)

### Christmas Art

This month's cover feature focuses on some of the great works of art that represent the nativity. Some of these great paintings are, in fact, housed in the Scottish collection.

### The Christmas Survival Guide

Thomas Baldwin discovers a resource, which offers a timely reminder of the true meaning of Christmas: a concern that the meaning of Christmas is being lost. What should be a religious and family celebration is becoming a time of stress and worry.

### The Magic of Wesley

Ian Bradley celebrates the 300th anniversary of the birth of the man responsible for some of the best-loved songs of Advent and Christmas.



### Shining a Light

Thomas Baldwin profiles the composer and hymn-writer Graham Kendrick made famous through the contemporary hymn Shine Jesus, Shine.

### Assemblies with a Difference

A report on the recent youth Assembly in Dundee and the first Children's Assembly at Gartmore House, Aberfoyle highlights the work of the Kirk's current youth programme.

### A Thin Goose?

Financial writer Simon Bain issues a seasonal warning about the perils of easy credit, as financial instability appears to be looming for ever greater numbers of Scots.



### Christianity is not a Religion

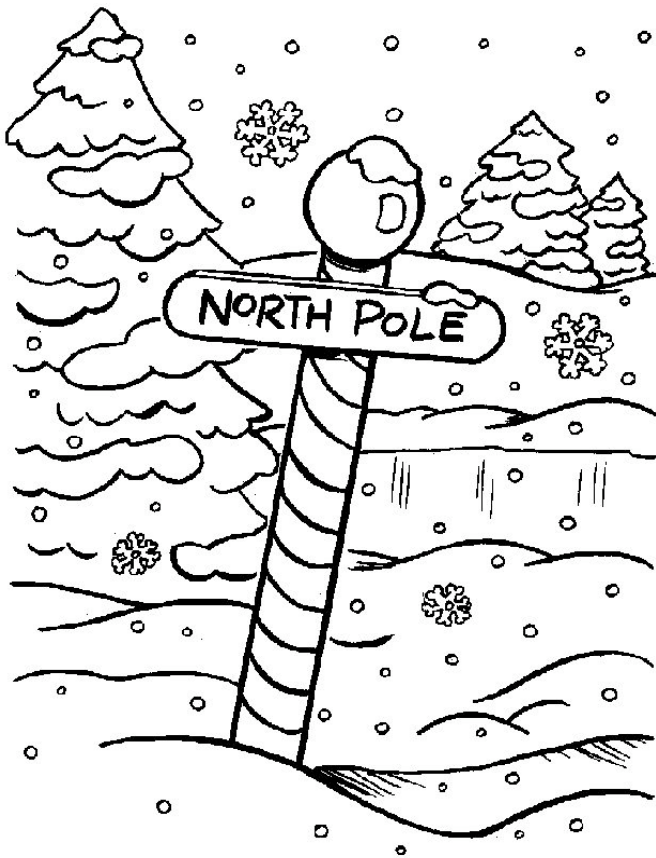
As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, George Wilkie argues that his great contribution was the abolition of religion.

### Baptism or Blessing?

In 'The Last Word' Muriel Armstrong calls on the Church to rethink the rules on Baptism.

**And more ... monthly columns for elders and young people; book reviews; travel, finance, lively letters; news from far and near; monthly prayer; prize crosswords ... all for £1.60.**

**Christmas Colouring**  
(for the Young and 'Young at Heart'!)





## West Kirk – Rota Information

### West Kirk Crèche Rota

9th December	Kathy Black
16th December	Shirley MacRae
23rd December	Mary Calder
30th December	Olive Gibson
6th January	Melanie Dickinson
13th January	Val Occardi
20th January	Margaret Farquhar
27th January	Kathy Black
3rd February	Shirley MacRae
10th February	Mary Calder

### West Kirk Tea Rota

Contact Olive Gibson 01506 871291  
*Note: Tea Makers, please bring milk.*

9th December	Juanita Allan	Jim Allan
16th December	Katie Albon	Olive Gibson
23rd December	George Stott	Morag Stott
30th December	Alison Baxter	Alison McNaught
6th January	Service At Polbeth	
13th January	Moirae McRae	Jill Murray
20th January	Liz Dyer	Janice Cooper
27th January	Olive Gibson	May Young
3rd February	Irene Grindlay	Margaret Rennie
10th February	Margaret Lamb	Janet Meikle

### West Kirk Flower Rota

If you cannot manage your turn to arrange or deliver flowers, please either swap, or contact Rosanna Rabaeijs (871259) for help in finding someone.

The start of the calendar for 2008 is already up the wall so if you would like to donate flowers in the coming weeks, where there are gaps, please also contact Rosanna, or speak directly to whoever is the arranger for the relevant week.

We could really do with a few more folk on the rota to arrange and deliver – please consider this and let it be known if you can help. As a one-off we may well need some extra help decorating the church for Christmas...

	Given	Arranged	Delivered
9th December	M.A Smith	Katie Albon	Kathy Black
16th December	Lorna Graham	Rosanna Rabaeijs	Moirae McRae
23rd December		Margo McEwan	Ivy Johnstone
30th December		Katie Albon	Irene Grindlay
6th January		Rosanna Rabaeijs	Kathy Black
13th January		Margo McEwan	Moirae McRae
20th January		Katie Albon	Ivy Johnstone
27th January		Rosanna Rabaeijs	Irene Grindlay
3rd February	Elizabeth MacPherson	Margo McEwan	Kathy Black
10th February	M A Smith	Katie Albon	Moirae McRae

### West Kirk Duty Rota

	Door Duty			Car Run
9th December	Alison McNaught	Christine Nicholl	George Stott	Stewart Munro
16th December	Juanita Allan	Jim Allan	May Arnott	George Stott
23rd December	Angus Baxter	Richard Bryce	Liz Dyer	Hugh Clarkson
30th December	Alex Easton	Jeanette Ferguson	Victor Ferguson	Richard Bryce
6th January	Lorna Graham	Irene Grindlay	Beryl Henderson	Hugh Clarkson
13th January	Alan Jessiman	Alison McNaught	Stewart Munro	Robert Hawes
20th January	Jill Murray	Christine Nicholl	Evelyn Paterson	Beryl Henderson
27th January	George Stott	Hazel Tod	Juanita Allan	Alan Jessiman
3rd February	Jim Allan	May Arnott	Angus Baxter	George Stott
10th February	Richard Bryce	Liz Dyer	Alex Easton	Hugh Clarkson



## Polbeth Harwood – Rota Information

<b>Stewart Court Taxi Rota</b>	
9th December	Margaret Marr
16th December	Charlie Sturrock
23rd December	David Prentice
30th December	Eleanor Davidson
6th January	Margaret Marr
13th January	Charlie Sturrock
20th January	David Prentice
27th January	Eleanor Davidson
3rd February	Margaret Marr
10th February	Charlie Sturrock

<b>Polbeth Harwood Cleaning Rota</b>		
(for week commencing)		
9th December	Dot Cibbald	Norma Wilson
16th December	Anna Muirhead	Betty Macauley
23rd December	Marian Kinsman	Joan Phillips
30th December	Ann Watson	William Watson
6th January	Margaret Marr	Jocky Marr
13th January	Esther Hamilton	Pat Erskine
20th January	Linda Eardley	Hazel Speirs
27th January	Ena Prentice	David Prentice
3rd February	Mary Mabbutt	Frank Mabbutt
10th February	Laura Carroll	Petrona Carroll

<b>Polbeth Harwood Duty Rota</b>				
	Door Duty			
9th December	Betty Macauley	Gordon Erskine	Janet Russell	Alan Mercer
16th December	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton	Reeta Griffin	Frank Mabbutt
23rd December	Anna Muirhead	Tom Walker	Betty Upton	Margaret Dempster
30th December	Alice Mackay	Kenneth Mackay	Jenny Doyle	Janice Davidson
6th January	Ena Prentice	David Prentice	Wilma Dickson	Lilias Fairley
13th January	Etta Walker	Eleanor Davidson	Effie Halliday	
20th January	Hazel Speirs	Frank Mabbutt	Margaret Hampson	William McCallum
27th January	Jessie Kelly	Tom Kelly	Ann Watson	William Watson

<b>Polbeth Harwood Café Rota</b>		
12th December	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly
19th December	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
26th December	Closed	
2nd January	Closed	
9th January	Grace Peace	Janet Russell
16th January	Frank Mabbutt	Gordon Erskine
23rd January	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton
30th January	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly
6th February	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
13th February	Grace Peace	Janet Russell



### Contributions for the next edition ...

It is anticipated that during 2008 *The Link* will be published as double issues throughout the year. Your thoughts on this slightly reduced publication schedule would be greatly appreciated.



Remember that this is your magazine; your contributions are most welcome at all times.

Contributions for the next edition of *The Link Magazine* should be submitted by the **first Sunday after the 15th of the month**. For the February/March issue, this will be Sunday 20th January.

Thank you to all the contributors to the magazine. Contributions can be sent via email, or handed in person to either Rev David Albon or Colin Dempster.

### Thank You

A big thank you to Hugh K Clarkson & Sons for their continued generosity and support in printing *The Link*.

We wish them all a very Happy Christmas with best wishes for 2008.



### Paws... for thought



**The only way to have a friend is to be one.**

***Ralph Waldo Emerson***  
***(American author, poet, philosopher)***